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Middle East

January 2016
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Start the year Light!

Healthy recipes for a brand new you

Try our healthy salads

Cleanse and detox your body

Stars of the month

Kick-start 2016 with fresh veg

GLAM GARDEN PARTY

A fabulous menu for sharing outdoors

Spanish roast fish with broad beans & chorizo, recipe p22

INSIDE



REVITALISE YOUR BODY
A 3-day New Year's diet



TRAVEL TO SPAIN
A traditional, gourmet menu

CPI MEDIA GROUP

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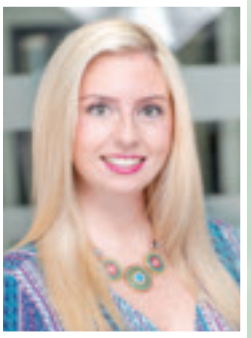
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Welcome!



Happy New Year, everyone! I hope you all had a fabulous time celebrating over the holidays – I definitely did (perhaps a little too much), and can honestly say I'm all partied out – for now, anyway.

After a whole month of over-indulgence, lavish get-togethers with family and friends, and repeatedly telling myself "oh well, it's Christmas", it's time to reign things in and start the year on the right foot – with a much needed health-kick.

As fun as the holidays may be, it's all too common to start feeling sluggish and run-down after a while, which is why this month's '*Healthy Issue*' is all about getting back on track. And no, that doesn't mean a diet of rabbit food for the foreseeable future!

We've got plenty of mouth-watering recipes inside, which are not only delicious, but also full of the right nutrients and vitamins to keep you energy-fuelled. If you're rearing to get started, I'd recommend our New Year three-day diet plan (*Clean & Lean, pg29*). The menu guides you through breakfast, lunch and dinner for three days with alkaline foods and low-calorie meals to rebalance the body – it really makes you feel great afterwards. Or, if you want something a little less regimented, the *super salads* feature on page 47 is a fun way of sprucing up those boring, ordinary salads you're sick of.

And, if anyone does still have their dancing shoes at the ready – don't miss the *Glamorous garden party* menu on page 52 – it's a gorgeously British affair of light (ish), tasty dishes that are ideal for passing around at a garden gathering.

Whether you're cutting back or not this month, I'm a big believer in moderation – so you'll still find a cake or two while flicking through – if what you're cooking and eating makes you feel good inside and out, long-term, that's all that matters. I hope you have a wonderful, healthy and happy start to 2016 and this year brings you many new and exciting culinary adventures!

Sophie
Editor

WHAT WE'RE LOVING!



Sales manager, Michael says: "I love this month's Istanbul feature – it sounds like an awesome place for a foodie getaway."



"These super salads are so tasty and ideal for keeping you on track with your New Year's health regime." says designer, Odie.



"I'm loving these chilled cucumber and prawn skewers. They are delicious and perfectly healthy to snack on or share at parties." says sales executive, Liz.

goodfood Middle East

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PRINTED BY
Emirates Printing Press LLC, Dubai

PUBLISHED BY
CPI MEDIA GROUP

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PO Box 13700
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Tel: +971 4 440 9100
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A publication licensed by IMPZ

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While the publishers have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of all information in this magazine, they will not be held responsible for any errors therein.

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BBC Good Food ME magazine is published by CPI Media Group under licence from BBC Worldwide Limited, 101 Wood Lane, London W12 7FA.
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Our recipe descriptions

V Suitable for vegetarians
You can freeze it
Not suitable for freezing
Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make
A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry
More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks
Low fat 12g or less per portion
Low cal 500 calories or less per main.

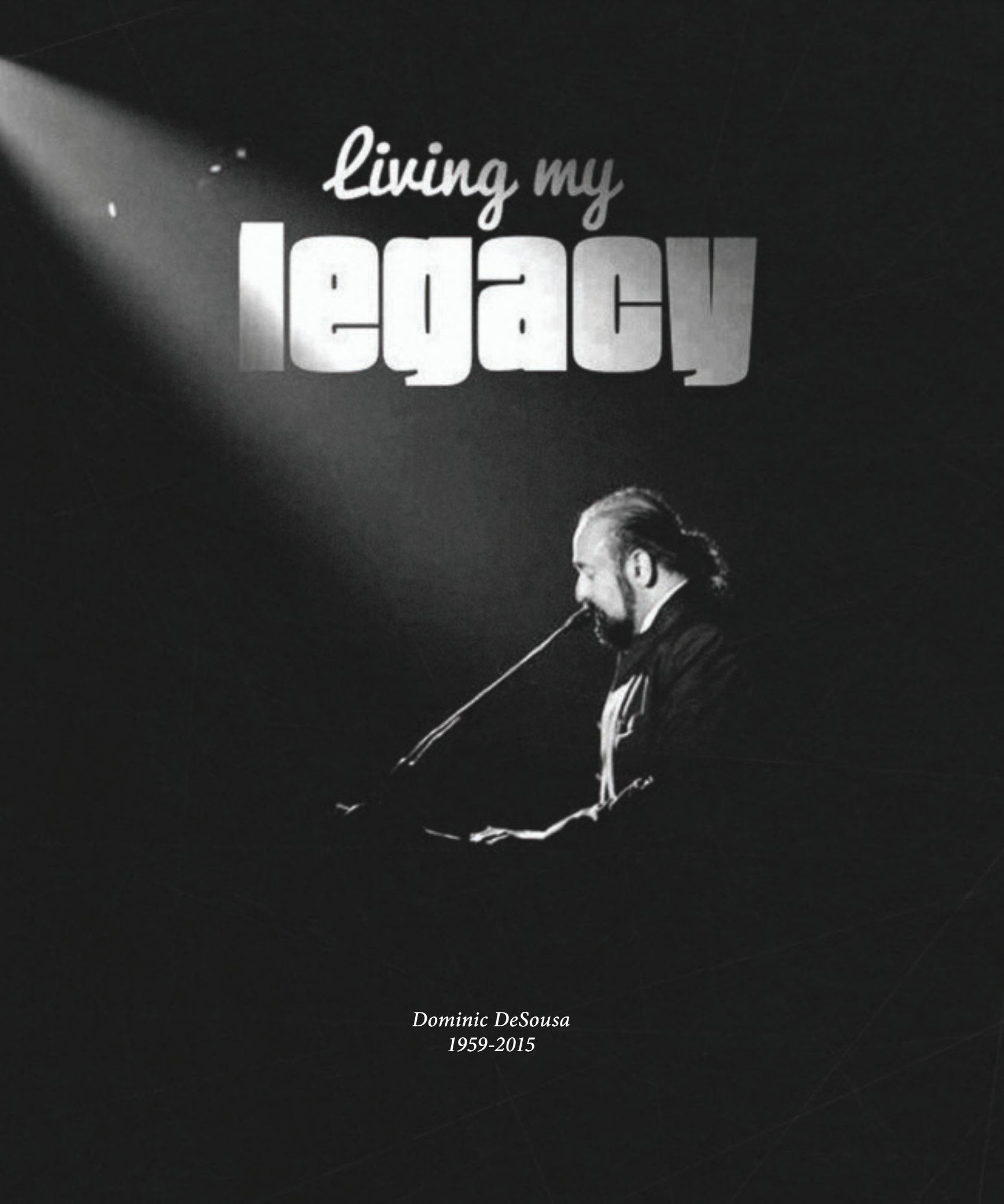
Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.
Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.
Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids

1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving
Vit C Iron Omega-3 Calcium Folate Fibre
Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients
GLUTEN FREE Indicates a recipe is free from gluten
Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:
P Contains pork
Contains alcohol


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Living my legacy



Dominic DeSousa
1959-2015

It is never easy to say goodbye to a friend and colleague. When that person is the owner of the company and the driving force behind its growth and success, then the task is almost impossible.

The founder and publisher of BBC Good Food Middle East and numerous other titles from CPI Media Group, 56-year old Dominic De Sousa died doing what he loved best – singing and entertaining people, at the BBC Good Food Middle East Awards on December 16 – which has been postponed until further notice.

His publishing empire with more than 25 magazines, Web portals and vertical industry awards began two decades ago.

Born in 1959 in Kenya to Goan parents, he lived what he later recalled as an idyllic childhood, full of sunlight, happy people and nature. A passionate lover of wild animals, it was here that the rebellious and independent streak that made him so successful in business was born. A typical act was hiding all his father's clothes so he couldn't go to work and would have to stay home and play with him.

When he was 11, the family moved to Wimbledon in South London. After studying biochemistry at the University of London at the request of his parents, De Sousa joined Reed Business Publishing in London as an advertising salesman on Middle East Computing, thus laying the foundations for his future career. He was a sales natural, combining an empathy with his clients with a killer instinct for closing a deal. Soon poached by London-based Alain Charles Publishing, he launched Computer News Middle East, which would form the basis of the CPI empire when he later bought the title and started his own company.

Success followed from a start-up in a small back office and the company now ranks as one of the leading B2B players in the region, thanks to his drive, his entrepreneurial spirit and his belief in people.

In sharp contrast to other publishers, De Sousa wanted his staff to succeed, encouraging them to become his business partners rather than employees and the simple CPI start-up is now a web of intertwined companies and relationships that he forged and held together. Never content with the status quo, he would constantly challenge what his staff were doing, encouraging them to seek new opportunities and open new doors for others.

A private man, ironically it was on stage performing with a group of musical CPI employees that he seemed happiest. Early on in his career he had sung with a semi-professional group and he later rediscovered that passion by singing at CPI events.

For those of us who remain at CPI, he is – quite simply – irreplaceable. The number of lives he touched across multiple industries in the Middle East and Europe is humbling and we, his colleagues, have been overwhelmed by messages and memories of those who knew him, respected him, and loved him.

One of a kind to us, he was always, just Dom. He will be missed more than we can express but his legacy lives on in the magazines he helped create and nurture.

Rest in peace, our leader and dear friend.

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FISHMARKET

EXPERT Q&A

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

For diners looking to start 2016 with a health-kick, which three outlets would you recommend visiting for quality, low carb food?



Kate Fisher

A highly-qualified and experienced nutritionist who is a trained microbiologist, and graduate of Nutritional Medicine from university of Surrey. Among other things, she has worked with private clinics and food brands as a nutrition consultant.

Organic Foods and Café has a new menu especially for the New Year using biodynamic sourced foods, so that would be a great one to try. Next, I'd recommend Reform Social & Grill in the Lakes, which caters for the whole family with lots of choice such as great salad combinations. They have an outstanding Freekeh salad - a low calorie ancient grain of young, dried wheat shoots, which packs a protein punch that fills, served with salmon and fennel. Lastly, Omnia Gourmet at the Fishing Harbour in Jumeriah 2, sources 95% of its ingredients locally and no sugar or processed flours are used in the delicious dishes.

Moderation is my motto, especially for New Year; I don't go for low carb as I think it's wrong to cut out a major food group (minimal sugar is more important). Fumé is famous for comfort food but I'd go for one of their salads which won't make me feel short-changed on flavour such as chicken, shrimp and pomelo salad with a tangy green nam jim' dressing. Middle Eastern food is generally packed full of herbs, uses olive oil and avoids cream and butter. I'd order lots of vegetable-based mezze such as fattoush, mutabal and tabbouleh at Flooka to go with fish grilled on the barbecue. Freshness is essential for preserving vitamins. Baker & Spice use produce from local organic farms delivered daily for their salad counter and you can really taste the difference as well as knowing it's doing you good, with a slice of their slow rise sour dough from natural yeasts.

Sally Prosser

Author of award-winning food and travel blog mycustardpie.com and keen eater. Champion of sourcing local, ethical, seasonal ingredients, knowing where your food comes from and the impact it has on your health and the planet. Loves custard.





Tomas Reger

Award-winning freelance chef and food consultant. Originally from the Czech Republic, he started his culinary career in London. Founder of Tomas Reger Food Consultants, he is now the executive chef of Intersect by Lexus, DIFC.

Bestro at Galeries Lafayette, Dubai Mall – the small café offers raw and vegan food and range of cleansing and energy boosting juices. Chef Hayley is very knowledgeable about nutrition and can offer you advice about your diet. Her food and juices put smile on your face no matter how stressful your day was. Next I'd say Baker and Spice – you are guaranteed that only the best ingredients are used. They are also the organisers of weekly farmers market and get most of their fruits and veg locally. Go for their salad section, it's fresh, filling and changes regularly. And if I may - Intersect by Lexus in DIFC – a newly opened café/ restaurant, where I happen to be in charge. Our menu is quite veg oriented and low carb overall. The dishes are created to give you energy rather than to make you tired and I will be very happy to look after you.

Comptoir 102 - I love their innovative menu, offering a great range of sandwiches, salads and juices. It caterers for intolerances and has organic produce too. Another is Super Be Natural by Hayley Mac, this is her strong point, with healthy options all around. The other option I'd suggest is simply, do it yourself! Go out and buy a juicer – my family and I do it all the time and even my kids love it. Every three months my wife and I follow the Jason Vale (juice master) plan. Which comprises only consuming juices for seven days to clean out and reboot the system. From January at The Croft we are introducing a healthy option for lunch linking in with the Spa in the Marriott.

Darren Velvick

Head chef at The Croft, Dubai Marriott Harbour Hotel & Suites, the former patron chef of Table9 has also been head chef at two Michelin-starred restaurant, Marcus Wareing at The Berkeley, and worked alongside Gordon Ramsay at Pétrus.



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Star Letter



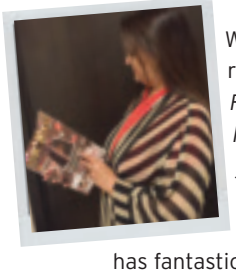
I've had a Good Food subscription for two years and always loved reading it with my wife at the beginning of every month. Recently being admitted at the hospital, my wife prepared your '*Supercharged bowl of Carrot & Ginger soup*' on pg32 of the December issue, claiming it was no trouble at all to prepare, and not to mention I found the soup absolutely delicious. Astonishingly my doctor also admitted I was regaining my health rapidly. I'll definitely be trying the different soups now that I know the benefits! As I was getting bored, my wife grabbed a couple of Good Food magazines for me to pass my time at the hospital (since these were widely available at home). Flicking through every page, I realised that every recipe made my mouth water. While in the hospital, I began to plan out my shopping list for the recipes I wanted to prepare. The simplicity of ideas and most of all the stunning presentation on the cover of all your magazines stands tall against all other magazines. Can't wait to get home to try out the recipes that I have marked and taken important notes of!

Tommy Randall



I'd like to say a big thank you for inspiring my festive menu last month! I loved your feature 'Home for the holidays' in the December issue. It gave me some new ideas – including the turducken roll, which I'd never heard of before (*I just hope I'm able to pull it off!*). You can't beat a good roast turkey, but I love how the magazine takes tradition and mixes things up a little bit too! Please continue mixing things up in the kitchen for us.

John Grey



What a joy it was to have received the *BBC Good Food Middle East 'Festive Issue'* and to see the jubilant recipes relevant to Christmas and New Year occasion. The issue has fantastic ideas and a wide range of cuisines. I'd like to say the team deserves recognition for this publication; it was a magnificent issue with quality recipes, and superb photos.

Syeda Romana Khalid



Last month we saw National Day, Christmas and New Year, and people are busy spreading and sharing love, happiness and fun. 'The Festive Issue' of BBC Good Food Middle East was a well thought gift for all those who are celebrating holidays in Dubai. Being a foodie, I always want to learn new recipes and your magazine has everything – your December issue was superb. Wishing all readers a Happy New Year!

Zaitoon Hameed

TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com
with your thoughts and comments, and send us your photos with your copy of BBC Good Food ME!

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on: **@bbcgoodfoodme**

Or, you could write to us at: **The Editor**, BBC Good Food Middle East.Grosvenor Business Tower, Tecom, Office 804PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.

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Culinary Q&A

Expert advice for in and out of the kitchen



Tomas Reger, *executive chef at Intersect by Lexus, DIFC and founder of Tomas Reger Food Consultants, addresses your culinary dilemmas.*



Q. I'd like to cook with less butter. What's a healthier option that doesn't sacrifice on flavour?

I do have to admit, I like my butter and it adds to the flavour, so first I would say - moderation is a key! However, I understand your motives. You can cook with olive oil or grape seed oil, which is better for frying as it heats up at higher temperature and is almost flavourless. If you really want to minimise fat in your dishes, try different cooking techniques, such as sous vide, were you will have exact control of the amount of fat you will use without loosing its flavour.

Q. I fear my heavy salad dressing is making my dish quite fatty. What dressings can I whip up at home that are not so heavy?

Invest in some good quality oils. Sometimes more simple you go, the better. Try using just nutty oils as your main dressing such as hazelnut or walnut oils. Or you can quickly blitz tomato, season it and have it as a more flavourful and richer dressing. Saying that, if your salad is good mix of veg, leaves and herbs, you will not need heave dressings at all as you don't want to cover up the flavour, so just few drops of lemon will do the job.

Q. I find it difficult to avoid over-eating in the morning. What breakfasts do you recommend to start the day, which are healthy yet filling?

Eggs - no matter what style of preparation, they will fill you up for long. Go simple though and avoid adding bacon or baked beans. Another great filler is mashed avocado on a protein bread or homemade porridge.



Kate Fisher,
a highly qualified and experienced nutritionist, is here to keep you healthy and happy.

Nutrition Q&A

I'm feeling lethargic all of the time. What foods should I eat to boost energy? Lethargy often arises to your consuming calories of empty food and of no nutritional value. Try eating most food in its close-to-nature as possible form. Select biodynamic foods: above soil grown vegetables for fibre, minerals and vitamins. And ideally, combine with wild caught fish, organic offal or free-range meats.

Is it healthy to skip meals if I have a heavy breakfast? Scientific research shows periods during the day of fasting is actually necessary to reboot the bodies insulin, leptin and ghrelin hormone pathways, which will actually stop the nasty metabolic syndromes from starting, like diabetes and weight issues. So, a breakfast of scrambled eggs with grilled salmon, peppers and mushrooms for example, should mean you will not be hungry for 4 to 8 hours depending on your own activity during the day and personal metabolism.



Compiled by SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs SHUTTERSTOCK

AN EXQUISITE CULINARY JOURNEY TO HOI AN

For a truly Vietnamese experience, head to Hoi An at Shangri-La Hotel, Dubai, where an authentic blend of flavours and traditional hospitality awaits.



If you're looking to escape the norms of Dubai, but don't want to travel too far to experience true authenticity, Hoi An at the Shangri-La Hotel, Dubai is a Vietnamese gem in the city.

Set in an intimate and stylish ambiance, the restaurant is complemented by an extensive menu offering a wide variety of delectable Vietnamese dishes served in a traditional style on bamboo platters and lotus leaves – ensuring the experience transports you into Vietnam territory.

Not only is the food and setting authentic, but also the team. Expect to be welcomed by an entirely Vietnamese crew – both inside the kitchen and at your table.

Make sure that you arrive hungry because the home-style cooking is sure to please the appetite.

Prepared by Head Chef, Pham Quan, the food is healthy and authentic. And, be prepared to be spoilt for choice once the menu is presented. Don't worry if you're struggling to choose because chef Quan's sister, Restaurant Manager, Pham Luyen will be on hand to assist.

Luyen and her team pride themselves on ensuring that your experience is second to none and will make you feel right at home with their charming and friendly personas.

Chef Quan and his team are just as passionate about the food with dishes such as crispy Canadian lobster ravioli with coconut and mango sauce; grilled marinated Angus beef tenderloin with foie gras; traditional Vietnamese pho soup and much more.

With colourful lanterns decorating the ceilings, colonial style furniture and live Vietnamese music giving the restaurant the calm and quaint atmosphere it is known for, Hoi An offers you an indulgent and delicious dining experience with enjoyable home-comforts.



50 Flavours of Vietnam

Every Friday and Saturday guests can feast on a selection of 50 mouthwatering versions of Hoi An's best-selling dishes in a fresh new concept – Vietnamese tapas. It is unlimited, so make sure you arrive hungry! 50 Flavours of Vietnam runs every Friday and Saturday from 12:30pm – 4pm; starting at Dhs145 food only; Dhs175 inclusive of soft beverages; Dhs265 inclusive of house beverages.

NEED TO KNOW

WHERE: **Hoi An, Shangri-La Hotel, Dubai**

CONTACT: **+971 (0) 4 405 2703**

MORE INFORMATION:

f&breservations.sldb@shangri-la.com



Tried & tasted

Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Newly opened



Reviewed by Sophie McCarrick
Editor of BBC Good Food Middle East, lover of all things food and a keen seeker of new dining experiences.



Where: The Maine Oyster Bar & Grill, The DoubleTree by Hilton, JBR

What's it like: Admittedly, this is one of my most preferred openings in Dubai recently. Unlike the usual glitz and glamour seen across much of the Emirate, you enter The Maine through the hotel's loading dock. It's a low-key, unpretentious affair, with a buzzing, social atmosphere – the perfect spot for catching up with friends or family over quality food, paired with a fabulous cocktail list that lives up to its reputation (don't miss the Bloody Marys!). Being tucked away with very little sign posting on JBR, once you get inside the atmosphere is laidback and warm – transporting you to America's East Coast. With specials painted on mirrored walls, by the time my dining partner and I looked at the menu, we were spoilt for choice. An obvious start to dinner, we shared freshly shucked oysters served with horseradish, lemon and Tabasco, and a gorgeous shell of scallop ceviche, shortly followed by crispy fish tacos and a mouthwatering lobster roll. Next came the winner of the evening; halibut and béarnaise served on a bed of mashed potatoes, beef bacon and green peas – a dish I'll be returning for – plus razor clams cooked in a delicious white wine and garlic sauce. Although quite full at this point, we shared a key lime pie to finish, which was light and fluffy. All in all, expect wholesome, honest food, great service and a hip vibe. The Maine's formula for a great dining experience is spot on - I see this fast becoming a city favourite.

If you want to go: Around Dhs350 per person for three-courses, excluding beverages. Call 04-4576719.

Photographs SUPPLIED and by REVIEWER



Where: Bistro Des Arts, The Address Dubai Marina

What's it like: It couldn't be a more perfect time to enjoy the latest import to Dubai Marina's Promenade – an intimate, French bistro that boasts authenticity, and a beautiful terrace overlooking the Marina, sheltered by a traditional red awning, much like you see in Paris. The licenced eatery welcomes with a charming, family-run feel and I instantly take a liking to how every other table appears to be seated with French expats – always a good sign. Most of the team are French, extremely friendly and waste no time stepping in to help us understand the menu (my French, sadly, isn't up to par). Dinner begins with an extremely mourish baked dish of Saint-Marcelin cow's milk cheese served with melba toast, which is gooey and tasty. We also shared a generous landaise salad with foie gras, smoked duck and confit gizzard. For mains, I opted for the delicious king prawns that were flamed at the table, while my dining partner enjoyed the hand-cut steak tartare – a rather simple looking dish that was seasoned to perfection. Not forgetting the delectable Moelleux Toblerone – it was a scrape the bowl sort of dessert. This hidden gem ticks all the boxes for a relaxed breakfast, lazy lunch, romantic dinner, or even a chilled out coffee break.

If you want to go: Around Dhs250 per person for three-courses, excluding beverages. Call 04-5511576.

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Hot-smoked trout & mustard salad, recipe p50

Home Cooking

Inspiring recipes for easy everyday meals and stylish weekend entertaining

IN THIS SECTION



- A perfect day-by-day guide, designed to help you reboot and refresh, **P29**



- Make a perfectly healthy side dish to accompany your main, **P39**



- Get glam in the garden with this fancy outside dinner party menu, **P52**

Stars of the month

Start the New Year off on the right foot – from fresh peas, beans and courgettes, we've got you covered.

Recipes CASSIE BEST Photographs PHILIP WEBB



Spanish roast fish with broad beans & chorizo, recipe p22

Food styling JENNIFER JOYCE | Styling LUIS PERAL



Scrumptious courgetti & meatballs, recipe p22



Chilli broad bean fritters with homemade labneh, recipe p22

This makes a lovely, light vegetarian lunch for friends. To make it more substantial, serve it with some toasted pitta bread and grilled halloumi



Chilli broad bean fritters with homemade labneh, recipe p23



Spanish roast fish with broad beans & chorizo

You'll find the best bit of this dish collects in the bottom of the pan! Juices from the fish mingle with white wine and paprika-spiked oils from the chorizo to make a tasty sauce for the broad beans and peas. Toss the veg through at the last minute to retain their vibrant bright green colour.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 35 mins **COOK** 45 mins

A LITTLE EFFORT | CALCIUM | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | IRON | 2 OF 5 A DAY | P

10-15 baby new potatoes
2 tbsp olive oil
2 small sea bass, gutted, scaled and fins clipped (you can ask your fishmonger to do this)
zest 1 lemon, then sliced
1 tsp fennel seeds
140g chorizo, skin removed, sliced
75ml white wine
200g peas, defrosted if frozen, blanched if fresh (see p24)
400g broad beans (or 800g in their pods), skinned (see p24 for how to prepare)
small bunch parsley, chopped

1 Put the potatoes in a pan of cold, salted water. Bring to a simmer and bubble for 10 mins, or until just tender. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Drain the potatoes, tip into a large roasting tin (big enough to fit the fish), and toss in 1 tbsp oil and some seasoning. Roast for 15 mins.

2 Make a couple of slashes in the side of each fish. Rub the remaining oil, the lemon zest, fennel seeds and some seasoning into the flesh and cavity of the fish. When the potatoes have had their cooking time, remove the tray from the oven, make space in the centre and place the fish on the tray. Poke the lemon slices into the cavities of the fish. Scatter the chorizo over the potatoes and pour over the wine. Return to the oven for a further 15 mins.

3 Check the fish is very nearly cooked – the flesh should pull away from the bones easily when gently pushed with a knife. Scatter the peas and broad beans around the fish, mix through the potatoes and chorizo and return to the oven for 2 mins more, to just warm the veg through. Scatter over the parsley just before serving.

PER SERVING energy 787 kcals • fat 33g • saturates 9g • carbs 53g • sugars 9g • fibre 20g • protein 54g • salt 1.4g



Scrumptious courgetti & meatballs

We've used this year's must-have gadget, the spiralizer, to transform the courgette into a spaghetti-like noodle. If you don't have a spiralizer, a julienne peeler will do the trick, or use a vegetable peeler to create courgette pappardelle.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 25 mins

EASY | P | VIT C | 2 OF 5 A DAY | GLUTEN FREE | ❄

400g pork mince
4 garlic cloves, 2 crushed, 2 left whole and unpeeled
2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for frying
400g cherry tomatoes
4 fat courgettes
4 tbsp half-fat crème fraîche
zest 1 lemon
50g pine nuts, toasted
large handful basil
Parmesan shavings, to serve (optional)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Put the mince in a bowl, season well and add the crushed garlic. Mix together with your hands, then shape into small meatballs – roughly the size of a cherry tomato. Heat 1 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan, add the meatballs and fry for 10-15 mins until golden brown. Meanwhile, tip the tomatoes into a roasting tin with the whole garlic cloves and the remaining oil. Season and roll around the tin until well coated in oil, then roast for 15 mins.

2 While the meatballs and tomatoes cook, use a spiralizer – I used the finer noodle attachment – or a julienne peeler to create courgette noodles. Once cooked, tip the meatballs into the roasting tin with the tomatoes, fish out the garlic and set aside, then cover the tin with foil to keep warm.

3 Wash the frying pan. Heat another 1 tbsp oil in the pan, squeeze the garlic cloves from their skins into the pan and mash with a fork. When sizzling, add the crème fraîche, lemon zest and some seasoning. Add the courgetti and toss in the pan for 30 secs until warmed through – any longer and it will wilt. Remove the pan from the heat, and tip in the meatballs, tomatoes and any juices from the tin. Toss together and scatter with pine nuts, basil and Parmesan, if you like.

PER SERVING energy 389 kcals • fat 28g • saturates 7g • carbs 7g • sugars 6g • fibre 4g • protein 26g • salt 0.2g



Chilli broad bean fritters with homemade labneh

The task of podding broad beans tends to divide cooks into two camps: some relish whiling away an afternoon slipping the beans from their skins, while others find it a tedious chore. Whichever camp you're in, it's worth the effort – the chewy skins are bitter, while the beans inside are sweet and tender, and look more attractive. Labneh, a Middle-Eastern strained yoghurt cheese is easy to make at home. Any leftovers are delicious spread on toast with a drizzle of honey.

SERVES 4 as a starter or light lunch **PREP** 1 hr plus 1 day straining and at least 1 hr chilling **COOK** 35 mins

MORE OF A CHALLENGE | V | CALCIUM | FIBRE | VIT C | IRON | 2 OF 5 A DAY ❄ fritters only

450g pot goat's milk yoghurt
sunflower or vegetable oil, for frying
plain flour, for dusting
FOR THE FRITTERS
600g broad beans (or 1.25kg in their pods), skinned (see below for how to prepare)
small bunch each mint, parsley and dill, roughly chopped
1 tbsp self-raising flour, plus a little for dusting

1 red chilli (deseeded if you don't like it too hot), roughly chopped
zest 1 lemon
2 small garlic cloves
1 tsp each ground cumin and coriander
½ tsp each ground allspice and sumac
FOR THE SALAD
200g broad beans (or 450g in their pods), skinned (see below for how to prepare)
100g peas, defrosted if frozen, blanched if fresh (see below)
juice 1 lemon
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
handful pea shoots
½ red chilli, deseeded and finely sliced
1-2 radishes, finely sliced

1 Make the labneh 1-2 days ahead – the earlier you make it, the richer it will be. Season the yoghurt with a good pinch of salt. Line a sieve with a large piece of clean muslin or a J-cloth, suspended over a bowl. Tip the yoghurt into the sieve, pull the sides of the muslin up to encase the yoghurt, twist and tie with a piece of string. Strain in the fridge for 1-2 days. The liquid from the yoghurt (called whey) will drip into the bowl, leaving you with a thick, spreadable yoghurt called labneh – see below for using up the whey.
2 To make the fritters, put the ingredients in a food processor, season and blend until smooth. Using 2 dessertspoons, scoop and shape the mixture into 16 quenelle shapes – or roll with floured hands. Place on a plate and chill for at least 1 hr, or cover loosely with cling film and chill for 24 hrs.
3 When you're ready to serve, heat at least 6cm oil in a wide, deep pan and turn the oven to a low heat, ready to keep the fritters warm. The oil is ready when a piece of bread dropped into the oil sizzles and turns brown within 30-40 secs (if the oil is too cool, the fritters will fall apart). Dust the fritters with a little flour and roll around the plate to coat the outside. Carefully lower 4-6 into the pan at a time and cook in batches, for 5-6 mins, until deep golden brown. Drain on a plate lined with kitchen paper and sprinkle with salt. Put the fritters in the oven while you cook the next batch.
4 While the fritters cook, mix the broad beans, peas, lemon juice, olive oil and some seasoning for the salad. To serve, spread a little labneh across the middle of each plate. Add 4 fritters, and spoon a little of the salad around. Top with a few pea shoots, a sprinkling of chilli, a few slices of radish and a drizzle of olive oil.

PER SERVING energy 365 kcals • fat 22g • saturates 5g • carbs 21g • sugars 6g • fibre 11g • protein 15g • salt 0.5g

Use whey to make bread

Save the liquid that drips from your yogurt (the whey) to make a tasty loaf. Simply replace some of the liquid in your recipe with the whey to add a deliciously sour note to your bread.

Preparing broad beans and peas

If you're lucky enough to get hold of fresh beans and peas, pop open the pods and remove the beans and peas inside. Blanch the veg by pouring over a kettle full of boiling water, leave to sit for 30 seconds to 1 minute, then drain and run under the cold tap. This will help the beans and peas to retain their bright green colour and a little bite.

Broad beans have a thick outer skin, so once blanched, split the skin with your nail and squeeze out the bean inside.





Courgette & cheddar soda bread

I love the simplicity and speed of making soda bread – just mix the ingredients, knead very briefly and they're ready to bake. Perfect for those weekends when you want a warm, freshly baked loaf for lunch, but haven't allowed time for the rising and proving required for yeasted bread.

This loaf is wonderful served simply with salted butter, dunked into creamy chicken soup or with your favourite ham and piccalilli.

CUTS INTO 12 slices **PREP** 25 mins **COOK** 40 mins
EASY V

400g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
2 medium courgettes
50g rolled oats
1½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
75g mature cheddar, grated
small bunch thyme, leaves only
284ml pot buttermilk
1 tbsp clear honey
1 egg, beaten

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan and dust a baking sheet with a little flour. Place a box grater on top of a clean tea towel and coarsely grate the courgettes. Lift the corners of the tea towel and, holding it over the sink, twist to compact the courgettes and squeeze out as much liquid as you can.
2 Put the flour, oats, bicarb and 1 tsp fine salt in a large bowl. Add most of the cheddar (save a little for the top), the thyme and the courgette. Mix the buttermilk and honey, then pour into the flour mixture. Stir with a wooden spoon until the dough starts to clump together, then tip onto a work surface and knead briefly to bring all the loose bits together – try not to overwork the dough or the bread will be heavy.
3 Shape into a round loaf and place on the baking sheet. Brush with egg and sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Use a sharp knife to score a deep cross on top of the loaf, then bake for 40 mins until deep golden brown. Best served warm, but leftovers will keep for 1-2 days.

PER SLICE energy 185 kcals • fat 4g • saturates 2g • carbs 30g • sugars 3g • fibre 3g • protein 7g • salt 1.2g


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Recipes KATY GILHOOLY Photographs ROB STREETER

Kale & goat's cheese frittata

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 30 mins

EASY V VIT C 1 OF 5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

1 tbsp olive oil
2 red onions, thinly sliced
200g chopped curly kale
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
8 large eggs, lightly beaten with a little seasoning
100g firm goat's cheese, broken into chunks

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan. Heat the oil in a 25cm ovenproof frying pan. Add the onions and cook for 10-15 mins until soft and caramelised. Add the kale and 1 tbsp water, and cook for 5 mins until the kale has wilted. Pour in the balsamic vinegar and bubble for 1 min, then add the eggs. Give everything a quick stir, then leave undisturbed to cook over a low-medium heat for 5 mins until the egg is nearly set and the frittata is turning golden brown on the bottom.

2 Scatter the goat's cheese over the top of the frittata. Cook in the oven for 10-15 mins until the cheese is bubbling and the frittata is set in the centre.

PER SERVING energy 316 kcals • fat 21g • saturates 8g • carbs 11g • sugars 5g • fibre 1g • protein 21g • salt 0.8g >>

Dhs11 per serving



Food styling NANCY MCDOUGALL



Basil & coconut salmon with spiced couscous

SERVES 2 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 15 mins

EASY | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | IRON | OMEGA-3 | 2 OF 5 A DAY

small bunch basil, leaves picked
200g coconut yoghurt
juice 2 limes, plus 1 lime cut into wedges
2 salmon fillets
1 tbsp nigella seeds
175g couscous
1 tsp turmeric
2 tsp ground cumin
140g green beans, trimmed and each cut into 3 pieces
½ head of broccoli, cut into small florets
1 tbsp olive oil

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan and boil the kettle. Whizz together the basil, 150g of coconut yoghurt, the juice from 1 lime and seasoning in a small food processor. Put the salmon fillets, skin-side down, on a baking tray lined with foil. Top each fillet with the basil dressing, then sprinkle over the nigella seeds. Bake in the oven for 10-12 mins until cooked through.
2 Meanwhile, put the couscous in a large bowl and stir in the turmeric, cumin and some seasoning. Pour over boiling water to just cover the couscous, cover with cling film and leave to sit for 10 mins. Meanwhile, put a pan of water on to boil, add the beans and broccoli, and simmer for 3 mins until they are just cooked. Mix together the remaining 50g yogurt with the olive oil and seasoning. Fluff the couscous up with a fork and stir in the yogurt, then the drained broccoli and beans. Serve the salmon with the couscous and lime wedges on the side.

PER SERVING energy 757 kcals • fat 36g • saturates 12g • carbs 61g • sugars 13g • fibre 7g • protein 44g • salt 0.3g



Tandoori paneer skewers with mango salsa

SERVES 4 (makes 4 large or 8 small skewers)
PREP 15 mins **COOK** 15 mins

EASY | V | FOLATE | VIT C | 2 OF 5 A DAY

150g pot natural yoghurt
3 tbsp tandoori paste
4 limes, 3 juiced, 1 cut into wedges
2 x 225g blocks paneer, cut into 3cm
1 red pepper, cut into 3cm pieces
2 small red onions, cut into 1cm slices
1 mango, cut into small dice
1 avocado, cut into small dice
small pack mint, chopped
2 x 250g pouches cooked basmati rice, to serve (optional)

1 Heat grill to high. Mix the yoghurt in a medium bowl with the tandoori paste, 1 tbsp lime juice and some seasoning. Add the paneer and gently stir in to coat. Thread the paneer onto metal skewers alternating with pepper and onion, then place on a baking tray lined with foil. Grill the skewers for 10 mins, turning halfway through, until the paneer is hot and the veg is softened and slightly charred.
2 Meanwhile, make the salsa by mixing the mango, avocado, mint and remaining lime juice. Heat the rice following pack instructions, if using, and serve with the skewers, salsa and lime wedges.

PER SERVING energy 393 kcals • fat 18g • saturates 8g • carbs 25g • sugars 30g • fibre 5g • protein 30g • salt 0.6g



Roasted cauliflower & hazelnut carbonara

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 40 mins

EASY | V | CALCIUM | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | IRON | 1 OF 5 A DAY

1 large cauliflower (about 700g), cut into small florets
1 tbsp olive oil
small bunch thyme, leaves picked
100g hazelnuts, roughly chopped
350g penne
100g Parmesan (or vegetarian alternative), grated
2 eggs, beaten
2 tbsp double cream
small pack parsley, chopped

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Toss the cauliflower with the oil, thyme and seasoning, and spread out on a large baking tray. Roast for 15-20 mins until starting to soften and caramelise. Sprinkle the hazelnuts over the cauliflower and cook for another 5 mins until the nuts are lightly toasted and the cauliflower cooked through. Meanwhile, cook the pasta following pack instructions.
2 Drain the pasta, reserving the cooking water, then return to the pan. Take the baking tray out of the oven and add the cauliflower and hazelnuts to the pasta, then stir in the Parmesan, egg, cream, parsley and 1 tbsp of cooking water. The heat from the pasta should be enough to just cook the egg without scrambling it. If the sauce is too thick, add a splash more cooking water. Check the seasoning and serve.

PER SERVING energy 693 kcals • fat 37g • saturates 10g • carbs 54g • sugars 7g • fibre 7g • protein 33g • salt 0.7g



Spanish chicken with crispy paprika potatoes

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 40 mins EASY 1 OF 5 A DAY

4 baking potatoes (about 750g), cubed
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp smoked paprika
4 tsp balsamic vinegar
6 roasted peppers from a jar, finely chopped
140g cream cheese
8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
140g cooked chorizo slices
100g bag mixed salad leaves

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Tip the potatoes onto a large baking tray. Mix 1 tbsp oil with the paprika, 2 tsp balsamic vinegar and seasoning, then pour over the potatoes and toss together. Bake in the oven for 10 mins while you prepare the chicken.
2 Mix the peppers with the cheese and seasoning. Open out the chicken thighs and spoon some of the cheese mixture into the centre of each. Pull the sides of the chicken together to seal in the filling, then put each thigh, seam-side-down, on individual squares of foil. Top each thigh with 2-3 overlapping slices of chorizo, then wrap in the foil.
3 Put the chicken parcels on top of the potatoes and return to the oven for 30 mins until the thighs are cooked and the potatoes are crispy. When the chicken is cooked, mix the remaining 1 tbsp oil and 2 tsp balsamic, and drizzle over the mixed salad leaves. Serve the chicken with the paprika potatoes and salad.

PER SERVING energy 436 kcals • fat 49g • saturates 18g • carbs 37g • sugars 3g • fibre 3g • protein 44g • salt 1.1g



Zesty lamb chops with crushed kidney beans

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 20 mins
EASY FIBRE IRON 1 OF 5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

8 lamb chops
2 tbsp olive oil
juice and zest 1 lemon
1-2 red chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 x 400g cans red kidney beans, drained
small pack mint, leaves picked and finely chopped
mixed green leaves such as rocket and watercress, to serve

1 Heat a griddle pan over a high heat. Brush the lamb chops with 1 tbsp oil, then rub all over with the lemon zest and some seasoning. Griddle for 3-4 mins each side for slightly pink meat, or a little longer for well done. You may need to do this in 2 batches. Remove from the pan, wrap in foil and leave to rest for 10 mins.
2 Gently fry the remaining oil, the chillies and garlic in a saucepan for 2-3 mins. Add the kidney beans and gently crush them with a potato masher, then continue to cook for 3 mins until the beans are warm. Stir in the lemon juice, mint and seasoning, and serve with the chops and mixed leaves.

PER SERVING energy 519 kcals • fat 24g • saturates 8g • carbs 21g • sugars 4g • protein 50g • fibre 10g • salt 1.5g



Honey & orange roast sea bass with lentils

SERVES 2 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 10 mins
EASY LOW CAL CALCIUM FIBRE VIT C IRON 2 OF 5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

2 large skin-on sea bass fillets (or other white fish – see below)
zest and juice 1/2 orange
2 tsp clear honey
2 tsp wholegrain mustard
2 tbsp olive oil
250g pouch ready-to-eat Puy lentils
100g/4oz watercress
small bunch parsley, chopped
small bunch dill, chopped

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Place each sea bass fillet, skin-side down, on individual squares of foil. Mix together the orange zest, honey, mustard, 1 tbsp olive oil and some seasoning, and drizzle it over the fillets. Pull the sides of the foil up and twist the edges together to make individual parcels. Place the parcels on a baking tray and bake in the oven for 10 mins until the fish is just cooked and flakes easily when pressed with a knife.
2 Warm the lentils following pack instructions, then mix with the orange juice, remaining oil, the watercress, herbs and seasoning. Divide the lentils between 2 plates and top each with a sea bass fillet. Drizzle over any roasting juices that are caught in the foil and serve immediately.

PER SERVING energy 495 kcals • fat 18g • saturates 3g • carbs 33g • sugars 9g • fibre 12g • protein 44g • salt 1.9g

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CLEAN & LEAN

Your New Year 3-day diet

- Nourish your body with alkaline foods
- Low-calorie meals and energy-boosting snacks
- Meat-free plan to help your body rebalance

CLEAN&LEAN

Wave goodbye to festive excess and give your body a New Year deep cleanse with Natasha Corrett's exclusive eating plan. If you're looking to lose weight longer-term, it's also a great way to kick-start 2016 Photographs MIKE ENGLISH

Natasha Corrett started her company, Honestly Healthy, after years of yo-yo dieting had left her feeling fatigued, bloated and under-nourished. She now follows an alkaline way of eating, which focuses predominantly on vegetarian foods and wholegrains, while avoiding foods that put strain on our digestive systems.



'We all know that processed foods, high sugar and refined foods are "bad" for us. Why is that? One reason is that they are all acid-forming when digested. Foods like meat, sugar, wheat, gluten, cows' dairy products, coffee and alcohol can react when we digest them to become acidic. When you hear about detoxing the body, this is exactly what you are trying to get out of your system.

'An alkaline cleanse like this one gives your digestive system a well-earned rest, and helps your body to absorb the nutrients from food more efficiently while you are on the plan. Longer-term, this way of eating encourages weight loss, clearer skin, increased energy, better sleep, a stronger immune system, shiny hair and stronger nails.

'This three-day plan is a gentle way to get back on a healthy track. The meals are low-calorie, but high in nutrition, so you shouldn't need to add anything extra. However, if your energy levels are flagging, I've suggested several healthy snacks (below). If you are pregnant, breastfeeding or on medication, you should check with your doctor first before you do any diet plan.' **Natasha says.**

What is alkaline eating?

Our bodies function at their optimum when our blood is at a pH of 7.35 on the pH scale. This is an alkaline state, whereas high acidity is gauged at pH 1 – remember the litmus test at school? By maintaining this alkaline state on the scale through the food we eat and drinks we consume, we can prevent a build-up of acid and keep our blood at that optimum pH.

If your system is overly acidic, you'll be more prone to disease, lethargy, poor skin, insomnia, mood swings and all manner of ailments associated with a body that is dealing with stress. Taking away the stress of digesting large quantities of foods that are not good for you means your body can avoid an acid build-up and thrive in a more alkaline state.

Healthy snacks

Almonds The most alkaline of nuts and packed with magnesium and B and E vitamins. Try them roasted with cinnamon for a little something extra.

Walnuts These are 'brain food'. Packed with essential fatty acids, they help the brain to function at its best.

Sunflower and pumpkin seeds Mix these with some goji berries and cacao nibs and you've got yourself the best protein-packed trail mix. They contain vital vitamin D too.

Macadamia nuts High in essential fatty acids, so you only need a few to act as a protein- and calcium-filled pick-me-up.

Dried figs Highly alkaline, they act as a brilliant antioxidant.

Mulberries High in protein, they provide a fantastic energy hit. I love the ones from The Raw Chocolate Company that are dusted in raw cacao.

How you'll feel

This plan is designed to give your new eating regime a kick-start – not to be followed long-term. As your body adjusts, you may get a few headaches, or feel irritable or fatigued, but this will pass. These side effects are a result of your body adjusting to fewer stimulants, like caffeine and sugar.



You could also nibble on...
Apricots, apples, pears, papaya, mango, avocado, pecans, nut and seed butters, gluten-free oatcakes, gluten-free bread and sesame seeds.

DAY 1 BREAKFAST

Green breakfast smoothie

A healthy start to the day that gives you plenty of energy throughout the morning. This will taste even better if you chill the milk and water.

SERVES 2 (makes 1 litre) **PREP** 10 mins **NO COOK**

EASY | V | LOW FAT | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | 1 OF 5 A DAY

1 handful spinach (about 50g), roughly chopped
100g broccoli florets, roughly chopped
2 celery sticks
4 tbsp desiccated coconut
1 banana
300ml rice milk (see tip, right)
¼ tsp spirulina or 1 scoop of greens powder or vegan protein powder (optional)

Whizz 300ml water and the ingredients in a blender until smooth.

PER SERVING energy 243 kcals • fat 10g • saturates 7g • carbs 27g • sugars 18g • fibre 6g • protein 7g • salt 0.4g

Using rice milk?

Brown rice milk is a great dairy alternative – I used one from Rude Health. Try to choose unsweetened versions, which are fortified with calcium and vitamins.

DAY 1 LUNCH

Quinoa tabbouleh

This dish is packed with nutrients. Parsley is high in iron, which is important if you are a vegetarian. Quinoa is a great low-carbohydrate alternative to rice as it's actually a seed, so is higher in protein than most carbs. I use Himalayan salt because it has a lower sodium content than table salt and is higher in minerals than sea salt.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 20 mins

EASY V LOW FAT LOW CAL FOLATE VIT C IRON 2 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

100g dried quinoa (or make up double – enough for this dish and dinner on Day 2 – and store in the fridge)
75g parsley, roughly chopped
300g tomatoes, cut into 1cm dice (no need to remove the seeds)
100g cucumber, cut into small dice
FOR THE DRESSING
1 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
juice and zest ½ lemon
drop of vanilla extract
1 tsp rice syrup or agave
pinch of Himalayan pink salt
½ garlic clove, crushed
50g salad leaves, to serve

1 Cook the quinoa following pack instructions, then set aside to cool.
2 Make the dressing by adding the olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, vanilla extract, rice syrup, pinch of salt and garlic into a jug and whisk until smooth. Mix this into the quinoa and mix together with all the other ingredients. Serve on a bed of salad leaves.

PER SERVING energy 284 kcals • fat 9g • saturates 1g • carbs 38g • sugars 14g • fibre 5g • protein 10g • salt 0.4g >>

Give it a protein boost

Pumpkin seeds and flaked almonds will give you more protein. If you make the dish at a later date, you could include mackerel, which adds vitamin D and valuable omega-3 too.

Light yet still satisfying

Food Styling LIZZIE HARRIS | Styling JENNY IGGLEDEN

DAY 1 DINNER

Miso-roasted aubergine steaks with sweet potato

SERVES 2 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 1 hr 5 mins

EASY | V | LOW FAT | LOW CAL | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | 2 OF 5 A DAY | GLUTEN FREE

1 large aubergine (about 375g)
2 tbsp brown miso paste (we used Clearspring)
350g sweet potatoes, unpeeled and cut into chunky wedges
1 tbsp sunflower oil
thumb-sized piece ginger, grated
1 garlic clove, grated
pinch of pink Himalayan salt
8 spring onions, sliced diagonally
small pack parsley, leaves chopped

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Peel the aubergine with a potato peeler and roughly spread the miso paste all over it – the best way to do this is with the back of a spoon.
2 Put it in a roasting tin along with the sweet potato wedges. Pour 225ml boiling water into the base of the tin, then add the oil, ginger and garlic. Sprinkle a pinch of salt over the wedges and place in the oven.
3 After 30 mins, pour another 125ml boiling water into the base of the tin and roast for another 20 mins. Repeat, adding 50ml boiling water and the spring onions, and roast for 10 mins more. Check the aubergine is cooked by inserting a knife in the centre – if it is ready it will easily slide in and out, and the aubergine will be soft on the inside.
4 Sprinkle the chopped parsley over the potato wedges, slice the aubergine into 2cm thick 'steaks' and serve on top of the potatoes. If there is no sauce in the bottom of the tin, add 3 tbsp water to loosen up the miso, then pour the miso gravy over the aubergine steaks and sprinkle with cracked black pepper.

PER SERVING energy 344 kcals • fat 8g • saturates 1g • carbs 54g • ugars 30g • fibre 15g • protein 6g • salt 2.5g

Cooking the vegetables

The water is added gradually in this recipe to avoid the veg stewing in the liquid, plus it helps them to stay juicy and moist.



New idea for a vegetarian supper

DAY 2 BREAKFAST
Green fritters

SERVES 2 (makes 6 fritters)
PREP 15 mins **COOK** 15 mins
EASY V FOLATE VIT C 1 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

140g courgettes, grated
3 medium eggs
85g broccoli florets, finely chopped
small pack dill, roughly chopped
3 tbsp gluten-free flour or rice flour
2 tbsp sunflower oil, for frying

1 Squeeze the courgettes between your hands to remove any excess moisture, or tip onto a clean tea towel and twist it to squeeze out the moisture.
2 Beat the eggs in a bowl, add the broccoli, courgettes and most of the dill, and mix together. Add the flour, mix again and season.
3 Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan. Put a large serving spoon of the mixture in the pan, then add 2 more spoonfuls so you have 3 fritters. Leave for 3-4 mins on a medium heat until golden brown on one side and solid enough for you to flip over, then flip over and leave to go golden on the other side. Repeat to make 3 more fritters (there is no need to add any more oil to the pan after the first batch). Scatter with the remaining dill to serve.

PER SERVING energy 359 kcals • fat 21g • saturates 4g • carbs 25g • sugars 2g • fibre 4g • protein 16g • salt 0.5g

Give it a boost
Increase vitamin D and omega-3 levels by serving some poached salmon with your fritters. For more protein, serve with an egg.





DAY 2 LUNCH
Alkalising green soup

Ground turmeric is a fantastic immune system booster – it fights off colds and gives you loads of energy, as it is a natural stimulant. I have it in tea most mornings. Fresh turmeric is harder to find, but is more beneficial than ground, as any fresh vegetable or root is more potent in its natural form.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 20 mins EASY V
LOW FAT 2 OF 5 A DAY FOLATE VIT C IRON GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

500ml stock, made by mixing 1 tbsp bouillon powder and boiling water in a jug
1 tbsp sunflower oil
2 garlic cloves, sliced
thumb-sized piece ginger, sliced
½ tsp ground coriander
3cm piece fresh turmeric root, peeled and grated, or ½ tsp ground turmeric
pinch of pink Himalayan salt
200g courgettes, roughly sliced
85g broccoli
100g kale, chopped
1 lime, zested and juiced
small pack parsley, roughly chopped, reserving a few whole leaves to serve

1 Put the oil in a deep pan, add the garlic, ginger, coriander, turmeric and salt, fry on a medium heat for 2 mins, then add 3 tbsp water to give a bit more moisture to the spices.
2 Add the courgettes, making sure you mix well to coat the slices in all the spices, and continue cooking for 3 mins. Add 400ml stock and leave to simmer for 3 mins.
3 Add the broccoli, kale and lime juice with the rest of the stock. Leave to cook again for another 3-4 mins until all the vegetables are soft.
4 Take off the heat and add the chopped parsley. Pour everything into a blender and blend on high speed until smooth. It will be a beautiful green with bits of dark speckled through (which is the kale). Garnish with lime zest and parsley.

PER SERVING energy 182 kcals • fat 8g • saturates 1g • carbs 14g • sugars 4g • fibre 5g • protein 10g • salt 0.7g >>

Give it a boost **Place a poached egg in the middle of the soup before serving to increase the protein content.**

DAY 2 DINNER

Asian quinoa stir-fry

This would also work well with rice noodles in place of quinoa. Tamari, a wheat-free alternative to soy sauce, is naturally salty. You might be surprised to see limes in here but, like lemons, they have an alkalising effect on the body when they're digested.

SERVES 2-3 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 15 mins plus 20 mins if cooking quinoa from scratch EASY V

FOLATE FIBRE VIT C IRON 3 OF 5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

100g dried quinoa
1 tbsp sesame oil
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
1 garlic clove, grated
thumb-sized piece ginger, grated
½ tsp ground coriander
1 tbsp wheat-free tamari
1 red pepper, cut in 1cm slices
1 large courgette (about 250g), sliced
100g green beans, tailed and cut in half
2 tbsp sesame seeds
small pack coriander, roughly chopped
FOR THE DRESSING
zest and juice 2 limes
pinch of pink Himalayan salt
2 tbsp sesame oil
½ garlic clove, crushed
½ tsp brown rice vinegar
1 tsp wheat-free tamari

1 Cook the quinoa following pack instructions and leave to cool, unless you're using the cooked quinoa from the day before.

2 In a large frying pan or wok, pour in the sesame oil, onion, garlic, ginger, ground coriander and tamari and fry on a medium-high heat for 2 mins until the moisture starts to evaporate, then add 3 tbsp water. Leave to fry for 1 min more, add the pepper and fry for another 2 mins.

3 Add 4 tbsp water, fry for another 2 mins, then add another 250ml water. After another 2 mins, add the green beans and another 125ml water.

4 After another 2 mins, add the courgette, 125ml water and leave to cook for 3 mins, then take off the heat.

5 Make the dressing by putting all the ingredients in a jug and whisking until smooth. Mix the quinoa into the veg, add the dressing and mix together with the sesame seeds. Stir through the coriander to serve.

PER SERVING (2) energy 465 kcals • fat 25g • saturates 4g • carbs 40g • sugars 14g • fibre 7g • protein 16g • salt 1.8g



A different way to enjoy quinoa

DAY 3 BREAKFAST
Turmeric smoothie bowl

A great breakfast-on-the-run solution. The gluten-free oats act as slow-releasing energy, and the cashew butter is a great source of protein. If you are allergic to nuts, use a seed butter instead.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **NO COOK**
EASY | V | 1 OF 5 A DAY | GLUTEN FREE

10cm fresh turmeric root, or 2 tsp ground turmeric
3 tbsp coconut milk yoghurt (we used Co Yo), or the cream skimmed from the top of canned coconut milk
50g gluten-free oats
1 tbsp cashew butter (or a handful of cashews)
2 bananas, peeled and roughly chopped
½ tsp ground cinnamon
1 tbsp chia seeds or chopped nuts, to serve

Peel the turmeric root, if using, and grate. Put all ingredients in a blender with 600ml water and blend until smooth. Serve in a bowl with chia seeds or some chopped nuts sprinkled over.

PER SERVING energy 291 kcals • fat 10g • saturates 4g • carbs 40g • sugars 20g • fibre 5g • protein 7g • salt none



For when you're in a hurry - simply blend and go

Warm main-course salad



DAY 3 LUNCH
Warm Baby Gem & feta salad

The zesty, lemony dressing has a great alkaline kick that will liven up practically any salad. Add 1/4 tsp of nigella seeds for extra flavour, if you wish.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 10 mins
EASY | V | LOW CAL | FOLATE | VIT C | 2 OF 5 A DAY

50g feta
2 large Baby Gem lettuces
1 grapefruit, peeled and segmented
zest ½ lemon
FOR THE DRESSING
juice and zest ½ lemon
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp rice syrup or agave
pinch of pink Himalayan salt
¼ tsp brown rice vinegar

1 Slice the Baby Gem lettuces into quarters just down the root of the lettuce so it stays together.
2 Heat a dry frying pan or griddle pan to a medium heat and place the lettuce quarters on it. Leave for 1-2 mins until the lettuce starts to brown slightly (you may need to do this in 2 batches).
3 Make the dressing by putting all the ingredients in a jug and whisking until smooth. Slice the feta into 1cm blocks. Divide the lettuce between 2 plates, top with grapefruit segments and feta, then drizzle the dressing over the salad. Sprinkle over the lemon zest to garnish.

PER SERVING energy 189 kcals • fat 12g • saturates 4g • carbs 12g • sugars 12g • fibre 4g • protein 6g • salt 1.2g »

Carry on eating the alkaline way

'Once you have finished the three-day kick-start,' advises Natasha, 'you can move onto the 70/30 principle, which means eating the alkaline way 70 per cent of the time, while eating a good, well-balanced normal diet the rest of the time. 'To keep on track after the three days are up, my tip is to cook plenty of pulses and grains, and roast some vegetables on a Sunday evening, so you have a full, healthily stocked fridge for the rest of the week. You can use these as a base for quick stir-fries, blend them into nourishing soups or add into winter salads. Take a look at the list, right, so you know what foods to stay away from, and those to enjoy and eat more of.'

Alkaline-friendly foods

- Wheat-free and gluten-free bread, pasta and flour
- Brown and red rice
- Quinoa
- Gluten-free oats
- Lentils
- Lemons, limes and grapefruits
- Dairy-free milk and yoghurt

Foods to avoid

- Processed foods
- Tea and coffee
- Bread
- Pasta
- Cakes, pastries and biscuits
- Fizzy drinks
- Sweets
- Meat
- Cow's cheese, milk & yoghurt (sheep's or goat's are fine as long as they are sugar-free)
- White rice

DAY 3 DINNER

Beetroot & butternut stew

This is so good for you. Cinnamon reduces inflammation, is naturally sweet and helps to reduce bloating.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 35 mins

EASY | V | LOW FAT | LOW CAL | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | IRON | 4 OF 5 A DAY | GOOD 4 YOU | GLUTEN FREE

250g raw beetroot
350g butternut squash, unpeeled
1 garlic clove, grated
1 small onion, diced
¼ tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp ground coriander
4 cardamom pods, seeds removed and crushed
1 tbsp sunflower oil
½ tsp cinnamon
100g green beans, topped and cut in half
50g chard or spinach, stems removed and leaves roughly chopped
small pack flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
brown rice, to serve (optional)

1 Peel the beetroot and chop into small pieces. Chop the butternut squash into small pieces. Put them in separate bowls until you need them.
2 In a large wide-topped saucepan, fry the garlic, onion, cumin seeds, coriander and cardamom pods in the oil for 2 mins on a medium heat. Add 125ml water along with the beetroot and leave for a further 5 mins until the water has simmered away.
3 Add 250ml water, the butternut squash and cinnamon, and leave to simmer on a medium heat for 10 mins. Add 250ml water and leave to simmer for another 10 mins.
4 Add 125ml water, the green beans and simmer for another 5 mins until the water has simmered away. Take off the heat and stir in the chard and parsley. Serve by itself or with brown rice for a fuller meal.

PER SERVING energy 250 kcals • fat 7g • saturates 1g • carbs 34g • sugars 23g • fibre 12g • protein 8g • salt 0.5g



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3 HEALTHY SIDES

Everything tastes better with mash! Try these lighter new ways

Green mash

SERVES 4 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 15-20 mins
EASY V VIT C GOOD 4 YOU

600g Desirée or King Edward potatoes, cut into chunks
100g bag spinach
75ml semi-skimmed milk
small pack curly parsley
85g pesto
2 tsp pine nuts

1 Put the potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil and cook for 15-20 mins until tender.
2 While the potatoes cook, put the spinach in a colander and pour over boiling water to wilt. Squeeze out as much excess liquid as possible and set aside. Put the milk and parsley (the whole bunch) in a pan and simmer gently until the parsley has wilted. Allow to cool slightly, then add to a liquidiser with the spinach (or use a hand blender) and blend so you're left with a bright green liquid.
3 Drain the potatoes, then add the parsley and spinach milk. Mash the potatoes until smooth, then stir in two-thirds of the pesto. Serve with the remaining pesto dotted over and topped with a sprinkling of pine nuts.
PER SERVING energy 257 kcals • fat 13g • saturates 2g • carbs 27g • sugars 3g • fibre 5g • protein 6g • salt 0.8g

Smashed Jersey Royals with basil & lemon

SERVES 4 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 25-30 mins
EASY V LOW FAT GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

650g Jersey Royals, washed and scrubbed
2 lemons, 1 zested, 1 sliced
small handful basil, leaves only
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, to serve

1 Put the potatoes in a saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 15-20 mins until tender.
2 Drain the potatoes and leave to steam-dry in a colander for 2 mins. Return to the pan and gently crush the potatoes, leaving them chunky.
3 Add the lemon zest and half the basil, then season and stir. Serve topped with the remaining basil and lemon slices, and drizzled with extra virgin olive oil.
PER SERVING energy 138 kcals • fat 1g • saturates none • carbs 29g • sugars 2g • fibre 2g • protein 3g • salt none

Butter bean mash

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 5-8 mins
EASY V 1 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra to serve
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 rosemary sprigs
2 x 400g cans butter beans, drained and rinsed

1 Put the olive oil in a saucepan with the garlic and rosemary sprigs, and place over a medium heat. Add the butter beans and coat in the oil, warming through for 5-8 mins.
2 Remove the rosemary sprigs and set aside. Mash the butter beans until smooth. Serve topped with rosemary leaves picked from the sprigs, a drizzle of olive oil and some freshly ground black pepper.
PER SERVING energy 155 kcals • fat 6g • saturates 1g • carbs 15g • sugars 1g • fibre 6g • protein 7g • salt none BT


Green mash


Smashed Jersey Royals with basil & lemon


Butter bean mash

Recipes CHELSIE COLLINS | Photograph MIKE ENGLISH | Food styling JENNIFER JOYCE | Styling JENNY IGGLEDEN

Let's eat more...
wild leaves

Get adventurous and go rustic in the kitchen this year with these forgotten ingredients.

Photographs WORKING IN FOOD



Wild garlic & nettle soup, recipe p42



Wild garlic butter on music paper bread, recipe p42

Wild garlic and nettles are the two leaves I would bet most of us could confidently identify.

Wild garlic, also known as ransoms, garlic chives, garlic leaves, or ramps by our American cousins, grows in large colonies in open woodland and shady hedgerows across Britain. It's tempting to treat wild garlic like spinach, but I prefer to think of it like chives or spring onions, as once cooked, it is less garlicky than its scent would lead you to believe.

Wild garlic is best when it's young and before it flowers. Once it blossoms, the flowers are also edible, and make a delicious oniony addition to salads. I pick wild garlic with my kids and binge on it over a couple of weeks – stuffing it under roast chicken skin, stirring it into bread sauce and butters, and making a huge batch of pesto that we smugly give to friends, who think we're a little bit Good Life.

Nettles are edible – and positively healthy – but how many of us have actually eaten them? They shouldn't be picked or cooked once the plants show any sign of flowering (around early June), as the leaves will be bitter.

Although the whole young plant is edible, it's best to use just the leaves – the stalks can be stringy. Just to be clear, we are talking about stinging nettles, so wear gloves when preparing them. And they must be cooked – the sting is removed the moment they hit the heat.

The leaves can be treated like spinach, although the finished flavour is more akin to cabbage. Simply sweat them in butter and serve as a side dish or on toast with a poached egg. Or blanch in boiling water, then drain and squeeze well and use in stuffings or quiches, dress with olive oil, or make a batch of nettle soup.

Nature's storecupboard



Wild garlic



Nettles

Wild garlic & nettle soup

SERVES 4-6 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 35 mins
EASY V LOW FAT FIBRE VIT C 2 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU

1 tbsp rapeseed oil, plus extra for drizzling
25g butter
1 onion, finely diced
1 leek, finely diced
2 celery sticks, thinly sliced
1 carrot, finely diced
1 small potato, peeled and diced
1.2 litres good-quality vegetable stock
300g young nettle leaves
200g wild garlic leaves (keep any flowers if you have them)
3 tbsp milk

1 Heat the oil and butter in a large saucepan. Add the onion, leek, celery, carrot, potato and a good pinch of salt, and stir until everything is well coated. Cover and sweat gently for 15-20 mins, stirring every so often to make sure that the vegetables don't catch on the bottom of the pan.
2 Pour in the stock and simmer for 10 mins. Add the nettles in several batches, stirring, then add the wild garlic leaves and simmer for 2 mins.
3 Remove from the heat and blend using a stick blender or tip into a blender. Return to the heat and stir through the milk, then taste for seasoning. Ladle into bowls and drizzle over a little extra oil, then top with a few wild garlic flowers, if you have them.

PER SERVING (4) energy 189 kcals • fat 10g • saturates 4g • carbs 16g • sugars 10g • fibre 6g • protein 6g • salt 1.0g

Wild garlic butter on music paper bread

MAKES 8 flatbreads **PREP** 20 mins plus resting **COOK** 35 mins EASY V

200g flour, plus extra for dusting
100g semolina flour or fine semolina
olive oil, for brushing
8 slices wild garlic butter (see recipe below) and flaky sea salt, to serve

1 In a bowl, mix together the flours and ½ tsp salt. Pour in 175ml water and mix to a soft dough. Tip onto a lightly floured surface and knead for about 5 mins or until smooth. Wrap in cling film and leave to rest for 30 mins. Meanwhile, place a pizza stone or one or two large baking trays in the oven, then heat it to 240C/220C fan or as high as it will go.
2 Divide the dough into 8 and shape into balls. On a floured surface, roll out balls very thinly into rough circles about 20-22cm in diameter.
3 Cut out 8 squares of baking parchment a little larger than the dough circles. Pop the dough circles on top and brush with olive oil. Cook the breads, 1 or 2 at a time, on the hot pizza stone or baking tray (still on the baking parchment) for 6-8 mins or until bubbled up in places, golden brown and crisp. Remove and leave to cool on a wire rack while you cook the rest. Pop all the breads back in the oven for 1 min to warm through. Remove and top with a slice of garlic butter (see below) and sea salt.

PER FLATBREAD energy 254 kcals • fat 14g • saturates 7g • carbs 28g • sugars none • fibre 1g • protein 4g • salt 0.6g

Wild garlic butter

MAKES 250g log **PREP** 10 mins plus chilling **NO COOK** EASY V GLUTEN FREE

250g pack unsalted butter, softened
flaky sea salt, to taste
50g wild garlic leaves, finely chopped

Mash the butter in a bowl with some sea salt – start with ½ tsp, then taste before adding more. Stir in the wild garlic. Using a piece of baking parchment, roll and shape the butter into a log, then twist the ends to form a cracker. Chill until needed. You can freeze the log for a month and cut off slices as needed.

PER TBSP energy 92 kcals • fat 10g • saturates 6g • carbs none • sugars none • fibre none • protein none • salt 0.3g

Wild garlic chicken Kiev

SERVES 4 **PREP** 25 mins plus 1 hr chilling
COOK 20 mins A LITTLE EFFORT ❄ uncooked

4 skinless chicken breasts
100g wild garlic butter, softened (see bottom left)
50g plain flour, well seasoned
3 large eggs, beaten
125g panko or coarse dried breadcrumbs
sunflower oil, for frying
mixed leaves and lemon wedges, to serve

1 Slice a deep pocket in each chicken breast. To do this, insert a deep knife into the thickest end of the breast. Keep pushing down along the breast, about halfway into the fillet, being careful not to cut all the way through. Push your finger down into the hole to open it, then stuff with 25g wild garlic butter, making sure that it goes all the way into the pocket. Repeat the process with the remaining chicken breasts.

2 Line up 3 shallow bowls and put the flour in the first, the beaten eggs in the second and the breadcrumbs in the third. Dredge each chicken breast in the flour, then coat in the eggs and lastly the breadcrumbs. Dip each one in the eggs for a second time, then coat again in the breadcrumbs. Transfer to a plate and repeat with the remaining stuffed chicken breasts. Cover the plate with cling film and chill for at least 1 hr.

3 When you are ready to eat, heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Fill a pan 2cm deep with oil and set over a medium-high heat. Once hot, fry the Kievs for 2-3 mins each side until golden brown, then transfer to a baking tray. Pop in the oven for 15 mins or until cooked through. Serve with salad leaves and a lemon wedge to squeeze over.

PER SERVING energy 645 kcals • fat 39g • saturates 14g • carbs 31g • sugars 1g • fibre 2g • protein 40g • salt 1.2g >>



Forager's twist on a much-loved classic



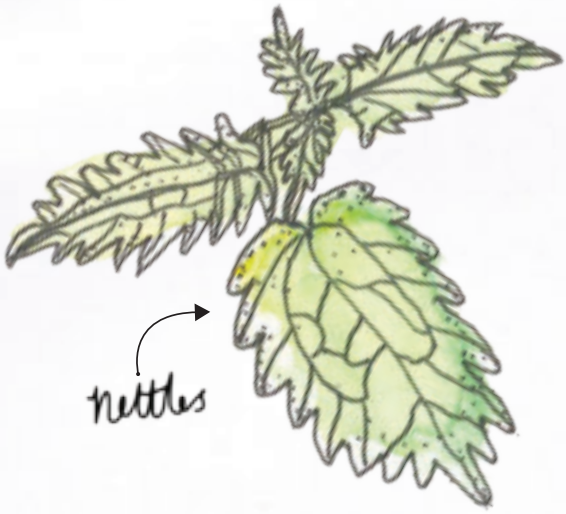
Nettle gnudi with wild pesto

SERVES 4 **PREP** 25 mins plus 4 hrs draining and 12-24 hrs chilling **COOK** 15 mins A LITTLE EFFORT V CALCIUM

2 x 250g tubs good-quality ricotta
200g young nettle leaves
50g Parmesan (or vegetarian alternative), plus extra to serve
2 egg yolks
nutmeg, for grating
350g semolina flour or fine semolina
6 tbsp wild pesto (see below)

1 Line a sieve with a piece of muslin and set over a bowl. Tip in the ricotta, gather up the ends of the muslin and gently tie together. Leave to drain for 4 hrs or preferably overnight.
2 Meanwhile, bring a pan of water to the boil. Blanch the nettle leaves quickly, then drain and chill under the cold tap. Thoroughly drain again, and squeeze out as much water from the leaves as you can, then very finely chop and chill until needed.
3 To make the gnudi, transfer the strained ricotta to a large bowl. Beat a little, then add all but a few tbsp of the Parmesan, the egg yolks, nettles, a good grating of nutmeg and plenty of seasoning. Give it a good stir to combine. Tip the semolina into a large baking tray (it will need to fit in your fridge later). Wet your hands, dip them in the semolina and, working quickly, scoop 1 heaped tsp of the ricotta mixture into your hands and gently roll into a ball. Place the ball on the semolina tray and roll around so that it is completely coated. Pick it up and roll between the palms of your hands to create a smooth ball, then put back in the semolina. Continue with the rest of the mixture – you should have about 28 balls in total. Leaving the balls in the semolina, make sure that they are well spaced, then cover loosely with cling film. Chill for 12-24 hrs – the longer the better – until a skin has formed on the gnudi.
4 To cook, bring a large pan of water to the boil. Meanwhile, spoon the pesto into a frying pan. Once the water is boiling, drop in batches of the gnudi and simmer for 2-3 mins or until they rise to the surface. Scoop out with a slotted spoon and transfer to a sieve. Repeat with the remaining gnudi. Heat the pesto in the pan with a few tbsp of the gnudi cooking water, to loosen it. Tip the cooked gnudi into the frying pan and gently turn the balls in the pesto. Divide between plates and scatter over the remaining Parmesan and a good grinding of black pepper before serving.

PER SERVING energy 688 kcals • fat 33g • saturates 13g • carbs 67g • sugars 3g • fibre 3g • protein 29g • salt 0.7g



Wild pesto

MAKES 275g jar **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 2 mins EASY GLUTEN FREE

150g young nettles or wild garlic leaves, or a mixture
50g Parmesan, finely grated
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
zest ½ lemon and a good few squeezes of juice
50g pine nuts, toasted
150ml rapeseed oil

1 If you are making this pesto with nettles, first bring a large pan of water to the boil, then drop in the nettles and cook for 2 mins. Drain and run under cold water, then squeeze out as much water as possible and roughly chop them.
2 Put the prepared nettles and/or raw wild garlic in the small bowl of a food processor, along with the Parmesan, garlic, lemon zest and pine nuts. Blitz to a rough paste. Season, and with the motor running slowly, add almost all the oil. Taste, season and add a few good squeezes of lemon juice. Transfer the pesto to a clean jar and top with the remaining oil. Will keep for two weeks.

PER TBSP energy 65 kcals • fat 7g • saturates 1g • carbs none • sugars none • fibre none • protein 1g • salt none



Illustrations RACHEL BAYLY | Food styling and styling working in food







MARINA HOME INTERIORS opens doors to its biggest store yet

Marina Home Interiors has moved to its new address across the road from its iconic Al Barsha warehouse showroom to a new-generation store concept set in exquisite environments

Dubai-based home furnishings store Marina Home Interiors has opened its doors to a stunningly bold flagship store, boasting its largest array of collections to date under one roof.

The showroom, on Umm Suqeim Road, spreads over 40,000 sq. ft. and signifies an important milestone in the home furnishings company's illustrious 18-year history.

Visitors will relish the opportunity to enjoy a never-seen-before shopping experience, where they can browse specially-designed walk-through displays of Marina Home's extensive furniture and decor.

Marina Home fans can enjoy convenient parking facilities at the new store, and shoppers can enjoy the diversity of shopping options without the hassle of navigating busy malls.

And there is more to look forward to; this year the store will introduce a bistro service, bringing a leisurely and laid-back experience for shoppers. The store also plans to host a series of in-store workshops and events across a range of genres.

The new location is easy to spot thanks to a giant LED screen on the outside corner façade of the building, which will present Marina Home's latest collections and live highlights. The closing of the original Al Barsha warehouse showroom marks the end of a remarkable era for this chapter of Marina Home, during which time their pioneering warehouse retail concept spearheaded the industry and shaped the geographical landscape of Al Quoz and Al Barsha and became an iconic landmark on this street for over 15 years. For those left wondering what is to happen to this iconic space, all we can say is that you can expect to be impressed with yet another unprecedented retail concept under works by the same group.



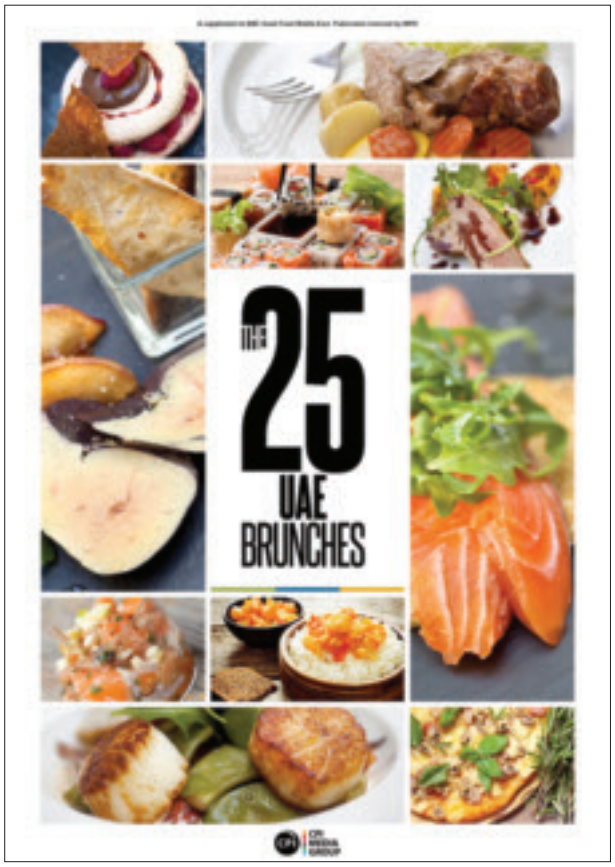
GPS coordinates for the new store: N'25°06'27.4" E'55°13'26.5"

Join the conversation online by using: #MarinaHometurns18 #MarinaHomeInteriors #MarinaHomeDubai

Marina Home Interiors first opened in 1997 and has stores across the GCC, Egypt, Pakistan and India and is opening soon in KSA and Qatar.

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CPI MEDIA GROUP

Super salads

Not just a side dish, these are substantial enough to be a meal in themselves

Quick Caesar salad with roast chicken & bacon

SERVES 4 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 20 mins EASY P

4 chicken breasts, skin on
8 slices streaky bacon
1 garlic clove, crushed
juice ½ lemon
3 tbsp natural yoghurt
3 tbsp olive oil
50g Parmesan, plus extra to serve
Worcestershire sauce (optional)
2 small romaine lettuces

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Season the chicken and place in a snug roasting tin. Drape the bacon around the chicken and roast for 15-20 mins until the bacon is crisp and the chicken just cooked through.

2 In a bowl, mix the garlic, lemon juice, yoghurt, oil and Parmesan, adding a dash of Worcestershire sauce, if you have any in the cupboard. Discard the outer leaves of the lettuce and tear the rest over a platter, mixing gently with the dressing. Serve with the chicken and crisp bacon, shaving over extra Parmesan, if you like.

PER SERVING 480 kcals • protein 53g • carbs 2g • fat 29g • sat fat 10g • fibre none • sugar 2g • salt 1.65g >>

TIP For a no-need-to-cook Chicken & olive Caesar salad, buy a ready-roasted chicken and tear the meat into chunks. Toss with the dressing and lettuce as above, plus 2 torn, toasted wholemeal pittas, a small handful pitted green olives and 2 roasted red peppers from a jar, cut into chunks.



Warm chicken liver salad

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 15 mins

EASY LOW FAT

140g fine green beans
200g chicken livers, trimmed
½ tbsp olive oil
½ tsp chopped fresh or dried rosemary
1 whole chicory or Baby Gem lettuce, separated into leaves
100g watercress
3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
crusty granary bread, to serve

1 Cook the green beans in a pan of boiling water for 3 mins, drain and keep warm. Meanwhile, toss together the chicken livers, olive oil and rosemary. Heat a large non-stick pan and cook the chicken livers over a high heat for 5-6 mins until nicely browned and cooked through – they should still be a little pink in the centre.

2 Arrange the beans on serving plates with the lettuce leaves and watercress. Add the vinegar to the pan, cook for a couple of seconds then spoon the vinegar and chicken livers over the salad. Serve warm with crusty granary bread.

PER SERVING 83 kcals • protein 10g • carbs 4g • fat 3g • sat fat 1g • fibre 1g • sugar 3g • salt 0.13g



Warm cauliflower salad

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 35 mins EASY

1 cauliflower, broken into florets
2 tbsp olive oil
1 red onion, thinly sliced
3 tbsp Sherry vinegar
1½ tbsp honey
3 tbsp raisins
small bunch dill, snipped
3 tbsp toasted, flaked almonds
50g baby spinach

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Toss the cauliflower with the olive oil, season and roast for 15 mins. Stir in the red onion and carry on roasting for 15-20 mins more until tender.
2 While the cauliflower is roasting, mix the vinegar, honey and raisins with some seasoning.
3 When the cauliflower is done, stir into the dressing with the dill, almonds and spinach, and serve.
PER SERVING 206 kcals • protein 8g • carbs 19g • fat 11g • sat fat 1g • fibre 4g • sugar 18g • salt 0.11g >>





Roast aubergine with goat's cheese & toasted flatbread

SERVES 2 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 20 mins EASY

2 aubergines, thinly sliced lengthways
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
12 cherry tomatoes, halved
1 Middle Eastern flatbread or pitta
3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
handful mint leaves
2 shallots, 1 finely chopped, the other thinly sliced
1 red chilli, finely chopped
50g goat's cheese, crumbled
handful wild rocket, to serve

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Brush the aubergine slices with 1 tbsp of the oil, then season. Arrange on a baking tray or sheet and roast for 20 mins until browned, popping the tomatoes on the tray for the final 5 mins. Tear the flatbread into pieces and place on a separate baking sheet. Brown in the oven for 8 mins, or until crisp, then remove.
2 For the dressing, in a small bowl, mix the vinegar, mint, chopped shallots, chilli, remaining oil and some salt and pepper.
3 Scatter the aubergine slices, tomatoes, sliced shallot and crisp flatbread into a serving bowl. Pour over the dressing, sprinkle with the goat's cheese and scatter over a little rocket.

PER SERVING 339 kcals • protein 9g • carbs 28g • fat 22g • sat fat 5g • fibre 6g • sugar 7g • salt 0.75g

Hot-smoked trout & mustard salad

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 5 mins EASY

200g green beans, trimmed
1 head romaine lettuce, leaves separated and torn if large
250g hot-smoked trout
50g ready-made croûtons
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
zest and juice 1 lemon

1 Cook the green beans in a small pan of boiling salted water for 3-4 mins, until just tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Transfer to a serving bowl, add the lettuce, trout and croûtons.
2 Whisk the oil with the mustard and lemon zest and juice. Season and drizzle over the salad. Gently toss to coat and serve straight away.

PER SERVING 265 kcals • protein 18g • carbs 12g • fat 16g • sat fat 3g • fibre 3g • sugar 3g • salt 1.36g



Smoked duck salad with apricots & walnuts

SERVES 4 **PREP** 20 mins **NO COOK** EASY

6 apricots, halved and stoned
½ small head of batavia or other curly lettuce, leaves separated
50g bag rocket
1 bunch of chives, chopped
100g pack smoked sliced duck breast
50g walnut pieces
FOR THE DRESSING
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
½ small shallot, finely chopped
3 tbsp walnut oil

1 Make the dressing. Whisk the vinegar and shallot and season. Gradually whisk in the oil until the dressing thickens.
2 Cut the apricots into crescent-shaped slices and toss in a bowl with the lettuce, rocket, chives and about half of the dressing. Divide between 4 plates, top with the duck and walnuts and drizzle over the remaining dressing. Serve.

PER SERVING 256 kcals • protein 9g • carbs 9g • fat 21g • sat fat 3g • fibre 3g • sugar none • salt 0.59g









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KIBSONS INTERNATIONAL

Number 8

Pisak



Glamorous garden party

This make-ahead menu has a distinctly British theme, and will suit all ages and tastes. Here's to alfresco dining!

Recipes SARAH COOK Photographs DAVID MUNNS

Chopped allotment salad, recipe p54

Smoked haddock & cheddar fishcakes with watercress sauce, recipe p54

Heirloom tomato, beet & red onion salad, recipe p56

Every recipe can be prepared or made ahead so you get to enjoy the party too





Chopped allotment salad

Why not serve this salad in little teacups? It gives the presentation a British twist and it also makes it easy for your guests to help themselves to a portion.

SERVES 10 **PREP** 15 mins **NO COOK**
EASY V LOW FAT FOLATE 2 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

200g frozen peas, cooked or defrosted
1 cucumber, diced
12 radishes, topped and tailed, then chopped
3-4 celery sticks, diced
small pack chives
1 punnet cress
small pack mint, leaves only
3 Baby Gem lettuces
a few edible flowers from the garden such as nasturtiums, borage, lavender and chive flowers, optional)
FOR THE DRESSING
2 shallots, finely diced
2 tbsp elderflower cordial
2 tbsp lime juice
2 tbsp cider vinegar
3 tbsp rapeseed oil

1 Mix all the dressing ingredients together with a little seasoning – the easiest way is to pop everything in a jar and give it a good shake.
2 Lightly toss together the peas, cucumber, radishes and celery. Snip in the chives and cress, and scatter over the mint.
3 Pop a lettuce leaf or 2 into 10 teacups (or arrange in a big salad bowl), then chop the remaining leaves and mix these through the rest of the salad. Divide between the cups, and chill until ready to serve.
4 To serve, scatter over the edible flowers, if you like, and drizzle a little dressing over the salads – or put out the jar of dressing for everyone to help themselves, just give it another good shake first.

PER SERVING energy 74 kcals • fat 4g • saturates none • carbs 6g • sugars 5g • fibre 3g • protein 2g • salt none



Pomegranate Pimm's

MAKES enough for 5 big glasses (easily doubled)
PREP 10 mins **NO COOK** EASY

Mix **200ml Pimm's** and **200ml pomegranate juice** in a big jug and leave in the fridge to chill. Dice a **15cm chunk of cucumber**. Tip the cucumber and **100g pomegranate seeds** into a jug.

When you're ready to serve, stir **600ml chilled lemonade** into the Pimm's mix and add some **ice** to the prepared glasses.

PER GLASS energy 144 kcals • fat none • saturates none • carbs 15g • sugars 14g • fibre none • protein none • salt none



Smoked haddock & cheddar fishcakes with watercress sauce

MAKES 16-18 **PREP** 1 hr plus at least 1 hr chilling
COOK 1 hr EASY uncooked fishcakes

425g floury potatoes, cut into large chunks
1 bay leaf
6 peppercorns
small bunch flat-leaf parsley, leaves and stalks separated
225g smoked haddock fillets, skin on (we used dyed haddock to give the mash a lovely golden colour)
200g unsmoked haddock fillets, skin on
75g mature British cheddar, grated
4 spring onions, ½ very finely sliced, ½ roughly chopped
50g plain flour
2 medium eggs, beaten
100g fresh breadcrumbs
sunflower oil, for frying
50g watercress (weighed after discarding the thickest stalks)
4 tbsp rapeseed oil
2 lemons, 1 juiced, 1 cut into small wedges to serve (optional)

1 Put the potatoes, bay leaf, peppercorns and parsley stalks in a big pan of cold water. Cover with a lid, bring to the boil and cook for 15 mins until tender. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the potatoes to a colander and leave to steam-dry. Turn the heat down, add the fish and poach gently for 5 mins until it flakes easily. Tip the potatoes into a big bowl and put the fish in the colander to drain for a few mins.
2 Add the cheese, some pepper and a little salt to the potatoes and mash well. Flake in about half the fish, discarding the skin and bones, and mash in too. Flake in the remaining fish in big chunks, scatter over the sliced spring onions and gently mix together. Roll the mixture into golf-ball-sized cakes.
3 Tip the flour onto a plate and season. Tip the egg and breadcrumbs into 2 shallow bowls each. Roll each fishcake first in the flour, then the egg, then the breadcrumbs. Sit on some parchment-lined trays that fit in your fridge. Chill for at least 1 hr or up to 24 hrs.
4 Fill a deep frying pan with 1-2cm of sunflower oil, heat until shimmering, then brown a few fishcakes at a time, turning regularly. If the oil gets too crumby, change halfway through. You can serve them straight away, or cool and chill for up to 24 hrs in the fridge, then simply warm for 30 mins in an oven at 180C/160C fan before the party.
5 Make the dipping sauce up to 1 hr before serving – put the roughly chopped spring onions, the parsley leaves, watercress, rapeseed oil, 2 tbsp lemon juice and 5 tbsp water in a food processor or blender. Whizz to the consistency of single cream.
6 Pile the warm fishcakes onto a platter with a bowl of watercress sauce on the side and some lemon wedges for squeezing over, if you like.

PER FISHCAKE (18) energy 245 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 3g • carbs 20g • sugars 1g • fibre 2g • protein 15g • salt 1.0g

Radishes with whipped goat's butter & celery salt

SERVES 10 generously **PREP** 10 mins **NO COOK**
EASY V GLUTEN FREE

85g goat's butter, at room temperature
140g soft creamy goat's cheese
1½ tbsp celery salt
1½ tbsp celery seeds
600g mixed radishes

1 In a bowl, beat the goat's butter with an electric whisk until pale and fluffy. Add the cheese and beat again for 1 min until blended. Scrape into a bowl and leave at room temperature until ready to serve.
2 Mix together the celery salt and seeds, and pop into a smaller bowl or saucer alongside the whipped goat's butter.
3 To serve, wash the radishes well, then pile onto another plate for dipping and dunking.
PER SERVING energy 127 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 8g • carbs 1g • sugars 1g • fibre 1g • protein 4g • salt 2.6g >>

Chilled cucumber & prawn skewers

SERVES 10 **PREP** 25 mins plus marinating **NO COOK**
EASY LOW FAT GLUTEN FREE

20 peeled and cooked king prawns (about 200g)
zest and juice ½ lemon
½ tsp poppy seeds
1 tsp rapeseed oil
1 cucumber

1 Mix the prawns, lemon zest and juice, poppy seeds and oil in a bowl, and leave to marinate for 10-20 mins while you prepare the cucumber.
2 Peel 20 strips from the cucumber, running the peeler down the full length. Stop and turn the cucumber when the peelings get a bit too seedy.
3 Thread each cucumber strip onto a small wooden skewer, bending back and forth to create ruffles. Add a prawn to each and put in the fridge to chill until the party.
PER SERVING energy 20 kcals • fat 1g • saturates none • carbs 1g • sugars none • fibre none • protein 3g • salt 0.8g



Pork & rabbit pie

CUTS into 20 squares **PREP** 1 hr plus cooling and 6 hrs 30 mins chilling **COOK** 1 hr 20 mins

MORE OF A CHALLENGE

The pie will sit happily in the fridge for up to 48 hours before eating. Just bring it out of the fridge for about 45 minutes before eating to take the chill off.

1 tbsp butter, plus a little extra, softened, to finish
2 onions, chopped
800g good-quality pork mince
375g pork belly, cut into 1-2cm cubes
500g rabbit, off the bone, diced into 1-2cm cubes
½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
1 tsp ground mace
1 tbsp yellow mustard seeds
1 tbsp English mustard powder
100g dried apricots, diced
small pack flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
FOR THE HOT WATER CRUST
900g plain flour
350g lard, cubed, plus extra for greasing
1 large egg, beaten
FOR THE JELLY
7 gelatine leaves
up to 400ml chicken stock

1 Start with the pie filling. Melt the butter in a small saucepan over a low heat. Add the onions and cook for 10-15 mins until soft, but not coloured. Leave to cool, then put in a big mixing bowl with the pork mince, pork belly, rabbit, nutmeg, mace, mustard seeds and powder, apricots and parsley. Add 1 tsp freshly ground pepper and 2 tsp salt, then use your hands to mix really well, squishing everything together. Cover and put in the fridge until ready to use.

2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Lightly grease a 20 x 30cm tin with a removable bottom with lard (or use a shallow 22-23cm round springform or loose-based tin), then line the bottom with a piece of baking parchment. To make the pastry, mix the flour with 2 tsp salt in a big bowl and make a well in the centre. Heat the lard and 400ml water in a saucepan on a low heat. Once the lard has melted, turn up the heat and bring to the boil. As soon as the liquid is boiling, pour it into the flour well, then mix with a wooden spoon into a dough – you may have to knead a few times with your hands to a smooth dough, but wait until the pastry is cool enough to handle.

3 Working quickly while the pastry is still soft, roll two-thirds of it on a lightly floured surface until big enough to line the base and sides of the tin with an overhang. If any tears or holes appear, patch them as well as you can with scraps of pastry – it's important to plug any gaps for when the jelly is poured in. Tip in the filling and flatten the top.

4 Roll out the remaining pastry large enough to make a lid. Brush the edges of the pie with a little of the egg, then lift and stick the pastry lid on top. Trim some of the overhanging pastry with scissors and pinch the rest to seal – make sure the pastry is inside the edge of the tin or you won't be able to lift it out at the end. Make a large hole in the centre of the pie, and smaller holes about 1cm in from each corner. Pop in metal piping nozzles if you have them – this will keep the holes open and help you fill it later. Decorate the pie with pastry scraps, cut into leaf shapes, and brush the top with more egg. Sit the pie tin on a big baking sheet and add 4 more pastry leaves to the sheet to cover the corner holes once the pie is done.

5 Bake the pie for 1 hr. Check the extra leaves 20-30 mins into the cooking time and remove once they are golden. Remove the pie after 1 hr and if there is any liquid bubbling around the pastry, carefully tip this into a jug (save for the stock) so the pastry can dry out. Leave the pie to cool for 20-30 mins until stable, then remove the tin sides and brush the pastry on the top and sides with another layer of egg before baking for a further 15 mins to crisp up. Leave to cool completely, then chill for a few hours.

6 For the jelly, soak the gelatine in cold water for 10 mins until the leaves soften. If you have any juices saved from the pie, top up with stock to 400ml. Heat a quarter of the stock in a saucepan until just steaming, then take off the heat. Squeeze out the gelatine leaves and stir, one by one, into the stock. When the leaves have dissolved, stir back into the rest of the stock. Leave the stock at room temperature until cold. Check the pastry for any holes – if you find any, fill with a little softened butter to seal. Use a funnel to gradually pour the stock into the pie through the holes until full, then return to the fridge and chill for at least 3 hrs until the jelly is set. Scrape off any excess butter that has been used to plug the holes, cover the corner holes with the extra pastry leaves, and chill for up to 48 hrs (see tip, left).

PER SQUARE energy 495 kcals • fat 28g • saturates 11g • carbs 36g • sugars 3g • fibre 3g • protein 23g • salt 0.7g



Heirloom tomato, beet & red onion salad

SERVES 10 generously **PREP** 20 mins plus chilling
NO COOK EASY V LOW FAT FOLATE 2 OF 5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

700g heirloom tomatoes
500g cooked beetroot, cut into chunks
1 red onion, quartered, then sliced
2 tbsp wholegrain mustard
5 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 tbsp Pimm's
2 tbsp clear honey
2 raw beetroots, very thinly sliced (on a mandolin if you have one)

1 Leave the smallest tomatoes whole, and halve or cut the bigger ones into chunks. Tip into a bowl with the cooked beetroot and the onion. Whisk together the mustard, vinegar, Pimm's and honey with some seasoning. Pour it over the tomatoes and beetroot and toss together to coat. Keep in the fridge until ready to serve, stirring occasionally to marinate everything evenly.

2 When ready to serve, arrange the raw beetroot slices over a large platter or plate with a lip. Tip the beetroot and tomatoes with all their juices on top, add a little more seasoning and serve.

PER SERVING energy 79 kcals • fat 1g • saturates none • carbs 12g • sugars 11g • fibre 3g • protein 2g • salt 0.4g

Lemon meringue cheesecake

CUTS into 14 slices **PREP** 50 mins plus cooling and at least 2 hrs chilling **COOK** 1 hr 30 mins

MORE OF A CHALLENGE

Double dessert heaven! Two favourites in one slice

rapeseed oil, for greasing
300g pack ginger nuts, bashed to crumbs
100g butter, melted
FOR THE FILLING
3 x 280g tubs full-fat cream cheese
300g golden caster sugar
3 tbsp plain flour
2 tsp vanilla extract
zest 3 lemons, juice of 1
3 large eggs, plus 1 yolk (save the white)
300ml soured cream
FOR THE LEMON LAYER
2 x 312g jars lemon curd (we used Tiptree)
1 large egg, plus 3 large yolks (save the whites)
juice 1 lemon
3 tbsp plain flour
FOR THE MERINGUE
4 large egg whites (from above)
300g caster sugar
1 tbsp liquid glucose

1 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan. Grease a 25cm loose-bottomed or springform round tin with a little oil, and line the base and sides with a double layer of baking parchment. Mix the biscuit crumbs and melted butter, then press into the bottom of the tin. Bake for 10 mins.

2 To make the filling, beat the cream cheese for 1-2 mins with an electric hand whisk in your largest mixing bowl until creamy. Add the sugar, flour, vanilla, lemon zest and juice with a pinch of salt. Finally, whisk in the eggs and soured cream until blended. Pour the filling into the tin and tap a few times sharply on the counter to get rid of any bubbles. Bake for 40 mins.

3 Whisk together the ingredients for the lemon layer. Gently spoon the mixture over the cheesecake and pop back in the oven for 40 mins more until firm at the edges but still a bit wobbly in the middle. Turn off the oven and leave the cheesecake in until it is cold, then chill for at least 2 hrs or overnight.

4 A few hours before you want to serve, make the meringue. Put the egg whites in a big mixing bowl and put the sugar in a small saucepan with 100ml water and the liquid glucose. Place over a low-medium heat until the sugar has melted, then increase the heat and boil with a sugar thermometer in the pan. When the thermometer reaches 100C, beat the whites with an electric whisk until stiff peaks form. Keep boiling the sugar syrup until it reaches soft-ball stage – 113C on the thermometer. Remove from the heat and, while beating the whites, pour in the syrup in a slow, steady stream – avoid hitting the whisk blades. Keep beating until the meringue is stiff. Use a large spoon to pile on top of the cheesecake, then use a blowtorch to caramelise the meringue, or bake at 200C/180C fan for 5 mins or so. Chill until ready to serve.

PER SLICE energy 767 kcals • fat 38g • saturates 22g • carbs 97g • sugars 73g • fibre 1g • protein 8g • salt 0.9g gi

Food styling SARAH COOK | Styling LUIS PERAL



Kiwi kicks

Why not introduce the children to a new fruit this year – packed with yummy goodness, kiwifruit is often avoided by the little ones because of its appearance and texture. Veronique Parmentier, Zespri Global Health Marketing, Zespri Kiwifruit, lends advice and tips on the deliciously nutritious product, to encourage your kids to begin enjoying the fruit.

Compiled by SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs SHUTTERSTOCK





Q. What are the main health benefits of eating fruit, and kiwifruit in particular?

It's incredibly important that children have a good balance of fruit in their diet. Fruits are packed with vitamins, minerals and fibre, which are essential for healthy growing bodies and minds. Key benefits include immune boosting nutrients to fend off illness, decreased chances of obesity, and improved digestive health to reduce common childhood health issues such as constipation. A good level of fruit intake is also linked to improved brain function and therefore better performance in school.

Kiwifruit in particular is an excellent fruit to include in a child's diet as it's very high in vitamin C. Did you know that one kiwifruit has as much Vitamin C as that of 3 oranges? Kiwifruit is also bursting with antioxidants, while its low G.I. count ensures a balanced release of energy throughout the day – something essential for active children.

Q. What's the daily-recommended fruit intake for children?

Nutrition for children is based on the same principles as nutrition for adults – everyone needs a healthy balance of protein and carbohydrates, but the levels can vary depending on age and size. For children aged four to six years old, around two servings of fruit is recommended per day in order to get a good intake of nutrients. For ages seven and above, two to four servings of fruit a day is a good level since this will fuel busy bodies and active minds. Maintaining this with a balanced vegetable intake is recommended to achieve the golden number of five fruits and vegetables a day.

Q. Getting children to eat fruit can be quite a struggle, particularly if the fruit in front of them is odd-looking or an unknown texture. What's the best method to introduce new fruits to children?

The key to getting children to eat new and odd-looking food is to make it fun and creative. While fruit may look strange at first, allowing children to explore and learn about fruit varieties can really help engage them. For small children especially, it's great to get a bit messy to allow them to taste and explore new flavours in a controlled environment. For example, why not mash up some green kiwifruit 'monster goo' and see how they enjoy it. Edible paint (aka fresh yoghurt, fruit and a dash of food colouring) is also an incredibly fun way for them to play and sample flavours at the same time. Children also love anything frozen, so crush and freeze away!

For older children, getting them involved in the shopping and preparation process is a great way to introduce new fruits too. By giving them responsibility and teaching them about where fresh food comes from (i.e. not out of a packet), it can really help to engage them with healthy food and to learn about their diet. Setting a fun shopping task whereby they get to select a new piece of fruit each week is a great way to get them looking and learning about new types of fruit.

Did you know?

1 The kiwifruit is also known as a Chinese gooseberry.
2 It was named after the New Zealand Kiwi bird, an unusual flightless bird, because they are both small, brown and furry.
3 Kiwifruit is high in vitamins C and E, plus serotonin .
4 To ripen a kiwi, leave at room temperature. When ripe, refrigerate away from other fruit for up to two weeks.
5 Kiwifruit has more crude fibre than a bowl of bran flakes.
6 The fruit is safe for dietetics. Kiwi is in the low category for glycemic index, meaning it will not raise blood sugar quickly.
7 Eating three kiwis each day can reduce the potential of blood clotting by 18%.
8 Kiwis contain antioxidants that are known to protect the skin from degeneration.
9 Not all kiwifruit is fuzzy (and yes, you can eat the fuzz!). There is also Golden Kiwi, which has smooth bronze skin and is sweeter and more aromatic in flavour.
10 The actinidain in raw kiwifruit makes them unsuitable for desserts that are not eaten right away. This is because it can make the dish too mushy or stop it from setting.

10 top tips

Make vegetarian living easier with these simple ideas





Use for frying, in baking, in smoothies, or as a spread

1 CRACK A COCONUT

Whether it's drinking the water, smearing our skin in the oil or popping a spoonful into baking, coconuts seem to be the latest must-have ingredient. Nutritionist Jo Lewin says, coconuts can lower cholesterol, boost the immune system and kick-start metabolism. Coconut oil has a higher heating point than other oils so it retains its nutrients during cooking. Coconut yogurt has recently appeared as a dairy-free, lactose-free option and if you're looking for a sensible flour alternative, coconut flour is gluten-free and high in fibre.

2 TRY A FEW SIMPLE SWAPS

Make small changes to your meals and you'll find you can add more nutritional ingredients without too much adjustment. Swap potatoes for sweet potatoes and it counts as 1 of your 5 a day. Replace couscous with quinoa for a less-refined grain, or try homemade popcorn instead of crisps for less saturated fat and more fibre.

3 Make more of yoghurt

Dairy yoghurts or their substitutes make great frozen desserts. Simply push a lolly stick through the lid of each unopened yoghurt pot and freeze. They will keep for 2 months.

4 Clear the fruit bowl

Vegetarians tend to eat more fruit and vegetables than meat eaters, which in turn, means there could be more fruit going off in the fruit bowl than usual. You can freeze bananas, peel them and pop in a freezer bag. Grapes, amazingly, plump-up when frozen – arrange on a baking tray lined with parchment, making sure none are touching, then freeze for at least 2 hrs. When frozen, transfer to a bag or container and put back in to eat as snacks.



5 Include iron-rich foods

Vegetarians who eat a wide variety of foods are often not at risk of low iron as it's found in plant foods, though the body finds it more difficult to absorb than meat-derived sources. However, when vitamin C-rich foods are combined with foods rich in iron, absorption of the iron is substantially increased, so a squeeze of lemon over cooked green veg or a glass of orange juice with a meal is advised. Rich sources of iron include kidney beans, dried figs and apricots, oatmeal and rye, quinoa, chickpeas, lentils, soy beans and tofu. If you usually have a cuppa with your meal watch the amount of tea you consume as a substance called tannins, found in tea, is thought to inhibit the absorption of iron.



7 ENJOY A HEALTHY LUNCH

Resist grabbing the first plastic-packed sandwich you see and make your own using low-GI wholegrain, soya or linseed bread, spread with houmous or avocado, or even coconut oil. Get inventive with healthy fillings or pack it full of salad for a satisfying lunch with crunch.



Maximise the health benefits of your sandwich

8 ENTERTAIN EFFORTLESSLY

Whether you're the vegetarian, or a guest is, don't cook something separate when entertaining – meat-free is so easy and your guests will love being on-trend (and included in your menu planning). It keeps things stress-free for you, which in turn makes your guests more relaxed.

9 Check the label

Don't forget to consider whether desserts are vegetarian. Suet and gelatine are not vegetarian-friendly, but alternative versions are available. Check the labelling on your cheeseboard too – lots of cheese contains animal rennet.

10 SUPPORT VEGGIE KIDS

When your child announces they've decided to become a vegetarian, don't despair! Encourage the whole family to embrace it, for a few meals a week at least. Meat-free dinners can be child friendly but still interesting for the rest of the family – Vegetarian lasagne or Cheese & Marmite pasties, for example. For the rest of the week, serve dishes that can have meat or fish on the side. Try egg fried rice and throw prawns in at the end once you've removed a veggie portion.



Boost energy levels with healthy snacks on the go

6 SNACK WISELY

The trick to keeping energy levels up, says vegetarian athlete Alex Danson, is to plan your snacks. She says, 'I often have energy bars for a boost and many are high in protein too. Another trusted snack is natural yogurt with nuts and honey. I will also carry two or three pieces of fruit and a packet of oatcakes with me, just in case hunger hits.'



Photographs SHUTTERSTOCK | GETTY IMAGE (Alex Dorrson)


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The changing face of Dubai's food scene

Krysia McKechnie, founder and editor of ipp&co.com, explores the exciting, ever-changing and maturing landscape of Dubai's culinary sector.



In 1903 George Bernard Shaw wrote that 'There is no love sincerer than the love of food." For those who share a similar view, Dubai used to be a bit of culinary desert with a few notable exceptions. However, a gradual change has been taking place over the past couple of years and where once we had soulless, 5-star restaurants in empty hotels – I arrived in early 2010, Dubai was a virtual ghost town then – we now have the beginnings of an actual, home grown, sophisticated dining scene.

The change has not come overnight and it's still relatively recent but there are strong contenders for a new and different dining scene. From Middle Eastern fine dining to food trucks and pop up restaurants the city is starting to come into its own with food as consumers become more demanding in their tastes and restauranteurs become more adventurous.

In comparison with other, international cities, Dubai has been a bit slower to embrace a more daring and hip food scene. The city has in the past been more content to import its restaurants and chefs from elsewhere, taking its cues from other, more established dining scenes. At one point it was enough to ensure commercial success simply by siting your restaurant in a big name hotel and having a world famous Chef lend his name to the venture and turn up to the very well-publicised opening. At last things are beginning to change and this is excellent news for residents and Dubai itself as more and more tourists come to experience the changing food scene.

Samantha Wood, founder of impartial restaurant review website www.foodiva.net and curator of dine around experiences has noticed a change in the way the city eats. She says "Dubai's restaurant scene is beginning to show some maturity with a move away from celebrity chef concepts and international chains to home-grown restaurants, cafes and pop-ups. We're also seeing a larger focus on modern Middle Eastern cuisine with local ingredients being used when the season allows. Q'bara was the first to really elevate Arabic fare to a different, vibrant level. Silvena Rowe is also making inroads with her spin on Emirati cuisine."

A recent new dining addition to the burgeoning restaurant scene in new Dubai is Marina Social by Jason Atherton. While still a chain restaurant with branches in London, Hong Kong and New York amongst others it's a chain with a difference and a heavy emphasis on relaxed, informal dining with a heavy 'social' element and a commitment to elevating the standard of Dubai restaurants.

Chef Patron, Tristin Farmer, says "Having lived in Dubai for just over six months, I am impressed and amazed by the diversity of restaurants and cuisines that the city offers. In the last few years, Dubai has become one the most cosmopolitan cities in the world and obviously this has attracted worldwide interest into the culinary aspect and making it a destination for the 'foodies'. I recently went to try the some traditional Arabic street food; I really enjoyed the simplicity of the food, the open kitchens with traditional ovens and grills, the smell was amazing. Some of the best street food I have tried."

> *"It's fair to stay that Dubai is heading in the right direction. But ultimately for Dubai to be recognised as a global foodie city, love it or hate it, Michelin would have to start rating the Emirate - and I understand that is Dubai's goal for 2020, if not earlier."*

The change in Dubai's dining scene has also followed a global trend of pop up restaurants and food trucks. One of the first and most notably successful of these is Salt. Amal Al Marri and Deem Albassam set up Salt in 2013, first on a beach in Dubai and then on a beach in Ajman and a park in Abu Dhabi. This concept, one of simple premium food, sourced locally where possible, has been a huge hit with 'salters', the name given to fans of this dining establishment, clamouring for more and leading the team to >>

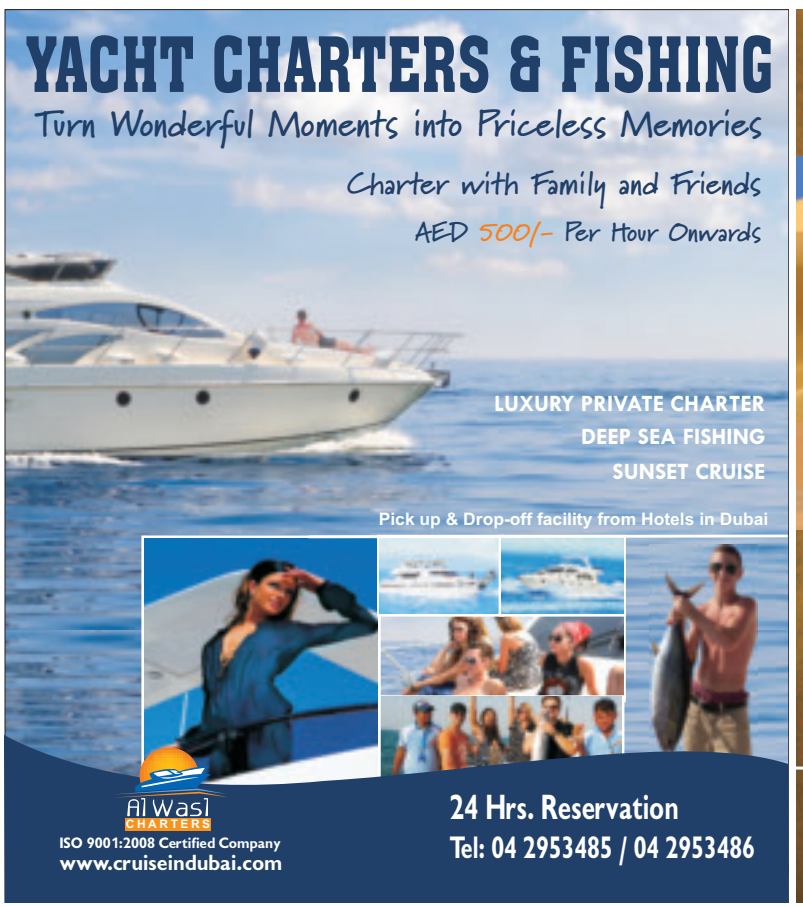
change opening hours and stay open until 2am in order to satisfy demand. Amal Al Marri, co-founder and Managing Director of Salt says "I believe that with all the development in Dubai and the fast growth, people started looking for simple outings and food has now become an entertainment rather than just a commodity. Dubai is not only developing large buildings, but also recreational spaces that we love being part of such as the beaches and parks."

So can Dubai now be classed as a foodie city? It's fair to say it's definitely heading in the right direction however, as Samantha Wood says 'ultimately for Dubai to be recognised as a global foodie city, love it or hate it, Michelin would have to start rating Dubai – and I understand that is Dubai's goal for 2020 if not earlier.' Regardless of your thoughts on Michelin, there's no denying that a star or two would put the city on the map in terms of food. If Dubai carries on building on these encouraging foundations, it won't be too long before it receives the accolades it's starting to deserve.

Do you have an opinion on this article? Share your thoughts with us at: feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com



Photographs SHUTTERSTOCK





A taste of Spain

Whether you're cooking on holiday or entertaining friends at home, these easy-to-prepare dishes will bring a touch of sunshine to your table

Recipes LIZZIE HARRIS Photographs DAVID MUNNS



SPANISH FOOD FOR FRIENDS

Nibbles with drinks

Citrus & fennel marinated olives

Stuffed & grilled vegetable bites

Menu for 4

Salmorejo – Rustic tomato soup with olive oil & bread

Smoky paprika seafood rice

Shaved fennel, courgette & orange salad

Peach puff pastry tart with almonds



Smoky paprika seafood rice, recipe p74



Salmorejo – Rustic tomato soup with olive oil & bread, recipe p73



Stuffed & grilled vegetable bites, recipe p73



Citrus & fennel marinated olives

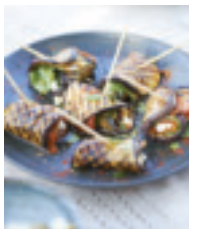
For such a simple tapas, you need good-quality olives marinated in olive oil. This recipe can be made ahead – and the longer the better, as the flavours will gradually infuse.

SERVES 4 as a snack **PREP** 10 mins plus marinating
COOK 5 mins EASY V GLUTEN FREE

½ heaped tsp fennel seeds
pared zest ½ orange (use a vegetable peeler to get long strips)
pared zest ½ lemon
2 bay leaves
3 rosemary sprigs
3 medium dried red chillies, halved, deseeded and roughly chopped
250g drained mixed olives
50ml olive oil

Heat a large dry pan, add the fennel seeds and cook for 1-2 mins until fragrant. Add the citrus zests, bay leaves, rosemary and chillies, then cook for 30 secs more. Tip in the olives and add the olive oil. Mix well and cook for 1-2 mins, then turn off the heat and leave to cool in the pan before serving. Will keep in a plastic container in the fridge for up to 1 week – bring to room temperature before eating.

PER SERVING energy 193 kcals • fat 19g • saturates 3g • carbs 3g • sugars none • fibre 2g • protein 1g • salt 1.2g



Stuffed & grilled vegetable bites

Make sure the vegetables are cooked and nicely charred – undercooked aubergines really don't taste good!

MAKES 8 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 35 mins
EASY V 1 OF 5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

1 large aubergine (about 350g)
1 large courgette (about 300g)
2 flame-roasted peppers, from a jar
1 garlic clove, crushed
3 tbsp olive oil
250g tub ricotta
25g finely grated Parmesan (or vegetarian alternative)
3 sundried or semi-dried tomatoes in oil (from a jar), drained and finely chopped
finely grated zest ½ lemon
8 basil leaves
small handful parsley, leaves picked and roughly chopped
½ tsp paprika

1 Cut the aubergine and courgette into thin lengths about 2-3mm thick – you should have 8 slices of each. Drain and rinse the peppers, remove any seeds, pat dry, then cut into quarters. Mix the garlic with the olive oil and some seasoning.
2 Heat a griddle pan over a medium heat. Brush the vegetable slices with the garlic oil and cook for 2-3 mins each side until completely soft and lightly charred (you'll need to do this in batches). You could also do this on a barbecue. Set aside on a plate and leave to cool. The vegetables can be griddled the day before and kept covered in the fridge – bring to room temperature before serving.
3 Mix together the cheeses, sundried tomatoes, lemon zest and seasoning. Lay out the slices of aubergine on a large board. Top each with a slice of courgette, a strip of pepper, and a basil leaf. Dot 1 tbsp of the cheese mix on top and roll the vegetables up. Skewer with a cocktail stick to secure.
4 When ready to serve, arrange on a plate and scatter over the parsley leaves and paprika.

PER SERVING energy 119 kcals • fat 9g • saturates 3g • carbs 3g • sugars 2g • fibre 2g • protein 5g • salt 0.1g



Salmorejo – Rustic tomato soup with olive oil & bread

SERVES 4 **PREP** 25 mins plus 2 hrs chilling **COOK** 10 mins
EASY LOW FAT FOLATE VIT C 2 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU
soup only

1 tsp cumin seeds
200g sourdough bread, crusts removed, torn into chunks
1kg very ripe tomatoes
2 fat garlic cloves
2 flame-roasted red peppers, peeled and deseeded (from a jar is fine)
1 tbsp Sherry vinegar
TO SERVE
2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled
4 slices Serrano ham
small handful parsley
drizzle of extra virgin olive oil

1 Put a small frying pan on a low heat, add the cumin seeds and toast for 1-2 mins, stirring frequently. Crush the seeds using a pestle and mortar. Soak the bread in cold water for 10 mins.
2 Meanwhile, to skin the tomatoes, cut a cross in the skin on the top and bottom of each tomato, then put them in a bowl and cover with boiling water. After 1-2 mins, drain the tomatoes and plunge into a bowl of ice-cold water. The skins should now peel off easily.
3 Cut the flesh into quarters and remove the seeds and pulp. Put the seeds and pulp in a sieve over a bowl and squish to release all the juices from around the seeds. Keep the juice and discard the seeds and pulp.
4 Put the garlic, tomato quarters and juice, peppers and cumin in the bowl of a food processor or blender. Squeeze out the water from the bread, then add to the processor. Season and blitz until very smooth. Add the vinegar to taste, checking for a good balance of flavours, then cover and chill for at least 2 hrs.
5 When ready to serve, roughly chop the eggs, Serrano ham and parsley. Ladle the soup into bowls and add some of each of the toppings. Add a drizzle of your best olive oil, a grinding of pepper and serve.

PER SERVING energy 204 kcals • fat 2g • saturates 1g • carbs 36g • sugars 9g • fibre 5g • protein 8g • salt 0.7g »



Crunchy salad with a zingy dressing

Shaved fennel, courgette & orange salad

Just the thing to accompany the rich seafood (see recipe, right). It's best to dress the salad at the very last minute to keep it fresh and crisp.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **NO COOK** EASY V
FOLATE FIBRE VIT C 2 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

1 orange
2 small fennel bulbs
2 small courgettes (yellow or green)
2 tsp Sherry vinegar
4 tbsp olive oil
juice ½ lemon
1 Baby Gem lettuce, leaves separated and washed

1 Using a serrated knife, cut the peel from the orange, removing as much pith as possible. Slice the orange and cut each slice in half, reserving any juice left on the chopping board for the dressing.
2 Remove any tough outer leaves from the fennel. Halve, cut out the cores, then slice as thinly as possible (using a mandolin if you have one). Trim the ends of the courgettes and, using a vegetable peeler, shave off long, thin slices, discarding the seedy, watery centres.
3 Mix together the reserved orange juice, the Sherry vinegar and olive oil. Season well and add lemon juice to taste. Just before serving, mix the fennel, courgette, lettuce leaves and orange slices with the dressing.

PER SERVING energy 170 kcals • fat 12g • saturates 2g • carbs 10g • sugars 5g • fibre 6g • protein 3g • salt 0.2g



Smoky paprika seafood rice

The savoury smokiness of paprika gives seafood a real lift. If you like big, bold flavours, you could add a little chorizo too. Make sure the seafood is very fresh and, for an authentic Spanish touch, buy prawns with their heads on.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 35 mins
EASY LOW FAT 1 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU

1.3 litress fish or chicken stock
large pinch of saffron (optional, see below left)
4 tbsp olive oil
4 garlic cloves, 1 left whole, 3 finely chopped
12 large prawns, shells on
4 baby squid (about 250g), cleaned and sliced
1 onion, very finely chopped
2 celery sticks, very finely chopped
1 tsp fennel seeds, lightly crushed
2 tbsp tomato purée
1 tsp smoked paprika (hot or sweet)
300g paella rice
250ml fino Sherry or dry white wine
300g fresh mussels, cleaned (discard any that are open)
large handful parsley, roughly chopped
1 lemon, cut into wedges, to serve

1 Heat the stock in a large saucepan. Add the saffron to infuse, if you like. Take off the heat and set aside. In a large deep-sided frying pan or paella pan, heat 1 tbsp of the oil. Smash the whole garlic clove and add to the oil. Throw in the prawns and cook for 2 mins until just turning pink but not cooked through. Push to one side of the pan and add the squid to the garlicky oil for 1 min or so, again just to colour. Remove the seafood to a plate.
2 Add the remaining oil to the pan, and cook the onion and celery slowly for 15 mins until very soft and beginning to caramelise. Add the finely chopped garlic, the fennel seeds, tomato purée and paprika, and cook for 5 mins more. Meanwhile, bring the stock to a simmer. Add the rice to the pan with the onion mixture, give everything a good stir, then add the Sherry and 1 litre of the hot stock. Bring to the boil and simmer gently for 15 mins, shaking the pan from time to time.
3 When the rice is almost cooked but still has a little bite, dot over the prawns, squid and the mussels. Add the cooking juices and the rest of the stock. Cover and cook for 5 mins until the seafood is cooked through, the mussels have opened and the rice is just tender. (You may have to add a splash more water if the rice looks dry.) Discard any mussels that haven't opened. Sprinkle over some chopped parsley and serve with lemon wedges to squeeze over.

PER SERVING energy 556 kcals • fat 14g • saturates 2g • carbs 63g • sugars 4g • fibre 4g • protein 32g • salt 1.7g

Using saffron

Saffron is the stigma from the saffron crocus. The threads are crimson, have a distinctive honeyish flavour and add a bright golden tinge to the seafood rice. It is one of the most expensive spices in the world, so leave it out if you prefer, however, it will add a distinct Spanish grassy-sweet flavour to the dish.



Peaches and almonds – a heavenly match

Peach puff pastry tart with almonds

Make sure your peaches aren't too ripe or they will be impossible to handle. Serve your tart Spanish-style, unadorned, at room temperature.

SERVES 8 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 1 hr 20 mins EASY VIT C

plain flour, for dusting
500g block all-butter puff pastry
6 just-ripe peaches (about 700g/1lb 9oz)
140g butter, at room temperature
100g golden caster sugar, plus 1 tsp extra for sprinkling
140g ground almonds
1 large egg
finely grated zest 1 lemon
½ tsp almond extract
2 tbsp sweet Sherry or Disaronno (optional)
25g flaked almonds

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Line a large baking tray with baking parchment. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pastry to a 3mm thickness. Cut a circle about 33cm in diameter with a sharp knife, using a plate or anything round as a guide. Using the rolling pin, transfer to the baking tray and score a circle 1cm in from the edge.

2 Bake in the oven for 12-15 mins until lightly puffed and golden. Remove from the oven and gently push the centre down with the back of a large spoon so that you have a flat base with a raised border.

3 Meanwhile, halve and stone the peaches, then slice thinly. In a bowl, beat together the butter, sugar, ground almonds, egg, lemon zest, almond extract and Sherry, if using. Spread the frangipane evenly over the pastry, leaving the border free. Top with the peach slices, neatly overlapping them in circles. Sprinkle over the remaining sugar and the flaked almonds.

4 Bake for 30 mins, then turn the oven down to 180C/160C fan/gas 4, cover the tart lightly with foil and cook for a further 30-40 mins. The frangipane should puff up between the peaches and be golden brown and set in the centre. Cool on a wire rack, then slice and serve. Leftovers will keep for 1 day.

PER SERVING energy 602 kcals • fat 41g • saturates 17g • carbs 44g • sugars 22g • fibre 2g • protein 11g • salt 0.8g



IN MY KITCHEN

Nancy Birtwhistle

Last year's Bake Off queen shows Holly Brooke-Smith around her spacious kitchen

Photographs DAVID COTSWORTH



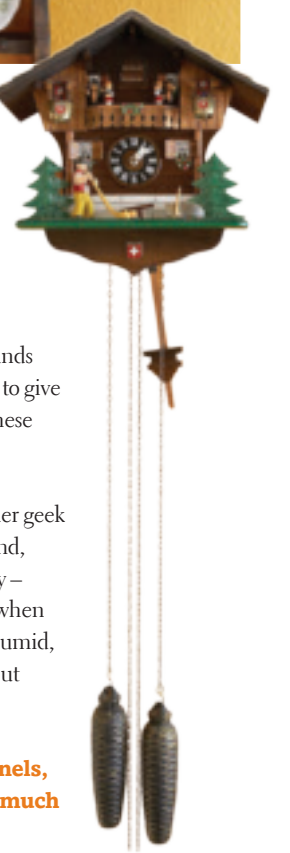
right Nancy's commemorative cake from BBC Two's An Extra Slice. below right Her grandma's imperial scales. below left Nancy's recipe notebook







Nancy's teapot collection, tea set and turkey feathers. below Tim's Swiss cuckoo clock



'I've had to go digital, but I'd never part with my grandma's scales'

A year ago, more than 12 million viewers tuned in to watch Nancy Birtwhistle – a retired GP practice manager – triumph in BBC One's Great British Bake Off final. Nancy and her husband, Tim, live in north Lincolnshire and have five children and eight grandchildren between them.

What's your kitchen style?

The house was built in 1903, so we've always tried to be sympathetic to its Edwardian period. But I don't think you can be too traditional with a kitchen – it needs to be fairly modern. When we first moved in, I had it with dark wood and pale walls, and there were lots of corners and shelves.

When did you redo it?

The kitchen's been like this for six years now. My husband Tim designed it, by and large. He said to me: 'You spend your life in here, so if you had a blank canvas, what would you want?' So now there's nothing I'm lacking. I love it.

What changes did you make?

The biggest difference was putting everything in deep drawers instead of cupboards – you can just pull them out, see exactly what is inside, and nothing gets lost in the back. And there aren't any more nooks and crannies either.

There's just the central worktop surface, which is much easier to clean. My dishwasher is also at eye level. You always think it should be on the floor, but eye level is so sensible – you don't need to bend down.

What do you cook on?

We put in the Aga 15 years ago. It was a 'want' not a 'need' really – but I've never looked back. I'd never cooked on an Aga before we got it, but I just thought this house needed one. I wanted it in traditional cream, to look as if it had always been here. When I was practising for Bake Off, I used the conventional oven because I needed to know exactly how the bakes were going to work in the tent. But I much prefer cooking with the Aga.

Do you have a favourite item in here?

Yes, my grandma's scales. I used these right up until Bake Off; I was still in pounds and ounces then. I've had to give way to digital scales, but these will always be here.

I also love my weather machine. I'm a real weather geek actually. It tells me the wind, temperature and humidity – which make a difference when you're baking. If it's very humid, you'll be fine with bread but hopeless with meringues.

We also have solar panels, so I like to check how much energy we're making. And the two sinks?

Yes, we put the second one in ourselves. Before we got this kitchen, I'd go to the sink and there'd often be something already going on there – Tim might be washing up for me or there'd be something draining. I tend to use the smaller one in the island for prepping food and the other one is for washing up. >>





What's on your bookshelf?
I recently started learning French, and lots of my patisserie and baking books are in French – they're fantastic. There's several by Mary Berry too, and a whole Delia section. I'm a massive Delia fan. Then a bit of Jamie, Gordon Ramsay, Elizabeth David and Julia Child.

What do you keep around the Aga?
My really useful spoons and tools – I use them all the time. The Bake Off magnets on the side are from my grandkids – I'm a long-standing fan of the show and they bought me these long before I applied.

What else is on your walls?
The cuckoo clock is unusual because it runs for eight days, when they usually just run for 48 hours. I secretly bought it for Tim when we were on holiday in Switzerland, for a Christmas present.
It might have been an inspiration for my Bake Off gingerbread house, actually!

"We raise our own turkeys each year, as well as chickens and guinea fowl"

Do you collect anything?
We use loose tea in this house, no tea bags, so I do like a good teapot. If I see a nice one when we're out, I'll buy it. I go in phases and take a different one from the shelf and use it for a while.

The tea set on my dresser was my grandma's. It's not particularly valuable or anything, but it just makes me think of her – she was a fantastic cook.

Where about the long feathers on the wall?
We raise our own turkeys each year, as well as chickens and guinea fowl.

The feathers are from my turkeys – one in memory of each one we've had. We last ate one at Easter. We had the family over and I cooked for 17. It was a feast – I made a selection of four desserts!

How about big equipment?
I'm not really a 'gadgety' cook, if I'm honest. I love my Kenwood mixer, but I only really use it for bread and big cake mixes. My most-used piece of kit is the hand whisk, and my Bamix stick blender is good for blitzing soups. My pizza shovel is also really useful for sliding pastry and bread straight into the Aga, so there's no risk of a soggy bottom!

Where do you eat?
In the summer, we eat in the conservatory. If there's just two of us, we'll eat in the kitchen, but any more than that and we move into the dining room. I love having the whole family around. Christmas is a massive meal for 20 people. When it's my year to host, I like to get well ahead. I'll be doing cakes, bakes and puddings for weeks in advance. There's always a turkey with all the trimmings; it's really not like any other meal in the year. Hams, pork pies – it's full on!



A Turkish delight

Sophie McCarrick takes you through the streets of Istanbul, where east meets west and the culinary scene boasts an exciting mix of traditional cuisines, enthused by neighbouring flavours and incoming food trends.

Blue mosque in Istanbul

Photographs SHUTTERSTOCK

Split between two continents, separating Europe from Asia, Istanbul is unlike any other city in the world. Straddling the Bosphorus Strait, it is Turkey's largest city which, strangely perhaps, has never been its capital and is home to more than 15 million inhabitants and over 10 million tourists per year - music to the ears of local food vendors.

Originally founded by the Greeks in the seventh century BC, the ancient city is home to some of Turkey's best restaurants, including many that have retained the skills of the old Ottoman cuisine over the years. Fish is a firm menu favourite - thanks to the lengthy coastline - and snacks are notorious throughout the city with kebab stands, pastry shops and cafes serving up local treats at all times of day.

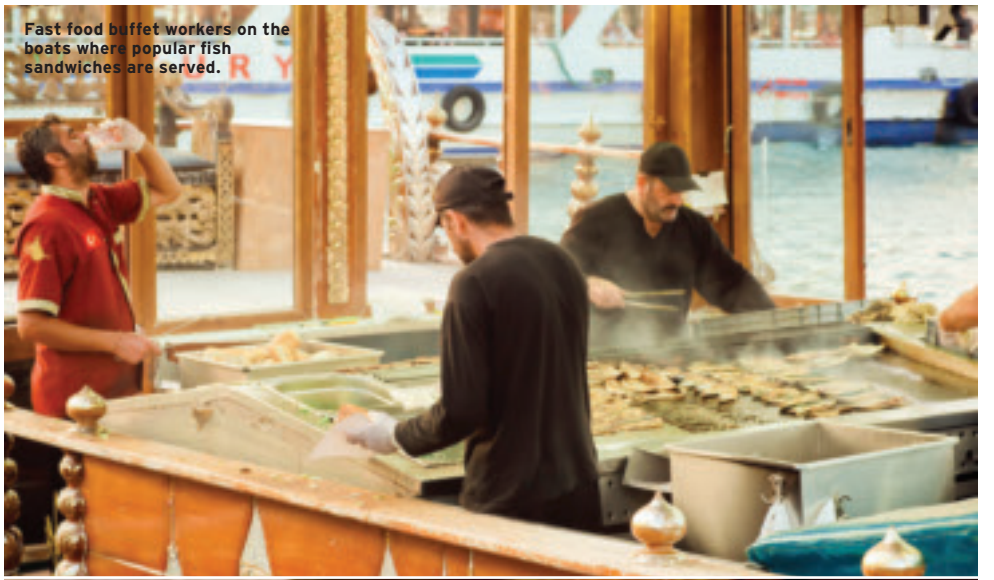
Istanbul's cobbled streets have served as the capital to four empires over the course of 16 centuries (the Roman 330-395, Byzantine 395-1204 and 1261-1453; Latin 1204-1261; and Ottoman 1453-1922). With such rich history and a vibrant past, a city abundant with international presence can only mean that an exceptional culinary scene is to be found.

On the ground in Istanbul and dedicated to finding the city's best eateries, Ansel Mullins of the Istanbul Eats and Worldwide Culinary Backstreets blogs, explains that "Istanbul is such a great place for those looking to explore the city and sample all that is on offer. The city is not necessarily full of 'foodies', however people who share a love for good, hearty local food."

He explains: "Istanbul has a big emphasis on regional cuisine, traditional Turkish food. However, the food is also influenced by close-by countries such as Greece, Italy and Syria. The city has a big street food culture, where visitors will find things such as doner kebab (meat cooked on a vertical rotisserie served in bread), shawarma (grilled meat often served in a wrap) and kofte (balls of minced meat, usually beef or lamb, mixed with spices and onions)." During the colder months you'll be sure to find a lot of winter-warmers around such as soups, particularly those made with lentils like mercimek corbasi (a steaming, red lentil soup peppered with chili and mint).

A national drink, tea (cay) comes in all flavours and temperatures in Istanbul. Popular with locals and tourists alike, apple tea is served in nearly all cafes, using the true flavour of apple as a refreshing way to take a break any time of day.

"You can really expect everything from



Fast food buffet workers on the boats where popular fish sandwiches are served.



Turkish Kofte with vegetables - Izmir kofte



Lamb Tantuni - Turkish Wrap roll bread with lamb

Istanbul, there are many fine dining restaurants, casual dining outlets and a new thing I've noticed around is the incoming of several hip-experimental restaurants, which are taking off as they offer something different," explains Ansel. "I think this is due to the fact that, up until recently, Istanbul didn't have many culinary schools. The whole concept is a very new thing here, so chefs in the region typically learned from their elders and followed the Ottoman way of cooking. The city is ever-changing and evolving, it's very accepting of incoming trends, however it always seems to retain its traditions."

It's also a city where bread is a culture. Freshness is key when it comes to bread in the city and you're not likely to find many pre-packed options on the shelves. A staple item, bread (ekmek) is most commonly baked twice a day, early in the morning and late in the afternoon so that it can be picked up en route home from work to serve with dinner. "Bread has major cultural significance in Istanbul and throughout the city you tend to see bread everywhere, however there isn't a wide variety. Instead, the Turks specialise in several breads and they do them well," explains Ansel.

In local bakeries, you're likely to find breads such as flat bread, pita (pide in Turkish) bread, lavash wafer-thin bread, white loafs, sinit and bazlama, which is otherwise known as 'village bread', a popular Turkish bread made from wheat flour, water, table salt and yeast.

"I think the sinit, which is somewhat like a bagel, a round, crispy bread coated with sesame seeds ranks top when it comes to bread in Istanbul. This is most commonly eaten fresh for breakfast with cheese and can be bought all times of day off the streets, sold from carts or by vendors carrying wooden trays on their heads," he added.

Often accompanied with a selection of breads, another popular trend in Istanbul is the meze style of eating - mezzes are a selection of small dishes that include things such as hummus, beyaz peynir (white cheese), kavun (sliced ripe melon), acili ezme (hot pepper paste with walnuts), haydari (thick strained yogurt like the Levantine labne), patlican salatasi (cold aubergine salad), kalamar (calamari or squid), cacik (yogurt with cucumber and garlic), dolma or sarma (rice-stuffed vine leaves or other stuffed vegetables, such as bell peppers) and kofte (meatballs).

If there's one thing we can all relate with Istanbul, it's the famous doner kebab, a traditional Turkish dish made from compressed meat (usually lamb, beef, chicken or veal) that is cooked on a vertical rotisserie, thinly sliced and served wrapped in a flatbread such as lavash or pita. Sliced directly from the spit to order, kebabs are the nation's most favoured snack and come with a variety of ingredients such as meat, fish and vegetables.

"You'll find kebabs wherever you go in Istanbul, they're all over the streets on food trucks and in restaurants: it's very much a kebab town. Visitors can be sure to find kebab joints on all street corners, and each cook in their own unique ways," said Ansel. There are many variations of the kebab, such as the rian kebab, which involves the slow cooking of a small lamb over coals in a deep hole in the ground, resulting in extremely tender meat covered in a thin layer of crackling. Kebab meat can also be marinated and cooked over a wood fire. Others include the fistikli kebab, consisting of minced suckling lamb stuffed with pistachios, the iskender kebab, which is doner lamb cut into long ribbons served on crumbled pita and yoghurt, topped with peppers plus tomato and butter sauces. Despite being most commonly associated with bread, kebabs are also served with rice or potatoes and often with a hot roasted pepper, much like the tokat kebab which is made up of lamb cubes grilled with potato, tomato, eggplant and garlic.

> *'Sinit is most commonly eaten fresh for breakfast with cheese and can be bought all times of day off the streets, sold from carts or by vendors carrying wooden trays on their heads.'*

Although seemingly like an average grilled meatball to the city's visitors, another Turkish favourite and one for the meat lovers is the kofte - minced lamb meatballs with herbs, commonly including parsley and mint. The difference between a good and bad kofte? Be sure to look out for those vendors who bulk up their kofte with breadcrumbs, the crème de la crème of meatballs is found in kitchens priding themselves on serving high meat content.

For those who love fish, Istanbul is the place for you, surrounded by the waters of various seas, the city offers over 20 different kinds of fish every season. >>



Pistachio baklava sold on Istanbul Turkey market



Turkish Chef posing with his Doner Kebabs

EAT THESE FOR SURE!

- Simit (circular bread with sesame seeds)
- Döner (meat cooked on a vertical rotisserie)
- Balik ekmek (grilled fish sandwiches)
- Köfte (meatballs)
- Nohut dürüm (chickpeas in pita bread)
- Lahmacun (thin, baked dough with minced meat, vegetables and herbs)
- Dürüm (a Turkish wrap made from lavash or yufka flatbread, with doner)
- Içli köfte (a fried croquette stuffed with minced beef or lamb)
- Firin sütlaç (baked rice pudding)
- Baklava (layers of filo pastry filled with chopped nuts and syrup or honey)



Crowd of walking people on popular Bosphorus promenade with sellers of fast food and street restaurants



Seller boils corn on the streets of Istanbul

With plenty of excellent fish restaurants located by the Bosphorus, diners can expect to find certain find a range of different fish in Istanbul, dependant on the month. January: anchovy, horse mackerel, red mullet, whiting. February: bonito and tubot. March: grey mullet and sea bass. April: swordfish. May: sole, shrimp and lobster. June: goby and tuna. July: crab and sardines. August: bluefish. September: bonito and sardines. October: mullet and small blue fish. November: whiting. December: anchovy.

"Istanbul is a gifted city when it comes to fish. Every season of the year you can find different kinds of great fish. The locals particularly enjoy the smaller fish like anchovy and horse mackerel, which are most commonly served to visitors in a piece of bread down by the water," said Ansel.

Remember, finally, to buy your 'evil eye' when visiting Istanbul, a typical blue and white charm acclaimed for protecting its holder. The old Turkish superstition claims that the evil eye will protect you against those capable of causing you harm because of jealousy, you're bound to see them all around the city.

"All in all, Istanbul is truly a city faithful to its traditions and its local cuisine," Ansel reflects.

A CHEF'S VIEW

Who better to give us an overview of a city's food culture than a chef? We grabbed a few moments from the busy schedule of Reif Othman, Executive Chef of PLAY Dubai, who is a fan of the destination, to give us some tips on eating in the city.

TOP ISTANBUL STREET FOODS OR SNACKS?
Most common on local streets are kebabs and meatballs, which are sold from small shops or mobile carts.

'MUST TRY' TURKISH DISHES?
I would highly recommend several dishes from the Taksim and Eminonu areas. I'd definitely suggest the stuffed mussels, fish and bread in Eminonu with pickle juice or kokorec (lamb intestines).

MOST SURPRISING THING ABOUT THE FOOD IN ISTANBUL?
The locals consume a lot of yoghurt, organs and vegetables. Generally, a cold yoghourt drink called ayran is always preferred and consumed with any meal.

WHICH HOT DRINK IS MOST COMMON?
Mostly black tea is preferred. Whilst on trips throughout the city, they tend to offer black tea or Turkish coffee.

RESTAURANT RECOMMENDATIONS?
For Turkish cuisine, I recommend the Hatay Sofrasi and Borsa restaurants, these are two of my favourite hotspots I like to visit. And Zuma, of course!

YOU HAVE A WEEKEND IN THE CITY - WHAT ARE THE 'MUST SEE' SITES?
Topkapi and Eminonu are the most historical places. Taksim is the central location and there are many small bars there. Ortakoy is also a must see location.

Competition



Win!

A party fit-out with contemporary furniture & lighting from Desert River, worth over **Dhs7,500**



Have you ever wanted to throw a party but haven't had the suitable furnishings to do so? Well here's your chance to win a complete party fit-out with Desert River!

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The prize draw for winning a full party fit-out with Desert River will be made at the end of January 2016. The prize is subject to confirmation of availability by Desert River between February 1 and July 31, 2016, and will not be available on UAE public holidays. The prize is non-exchangeable, can be used within the UAE only and does not include the vehicle range.

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What European brands does Desert River supply?

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Competitions

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to gourmet goodies, up for grabs.

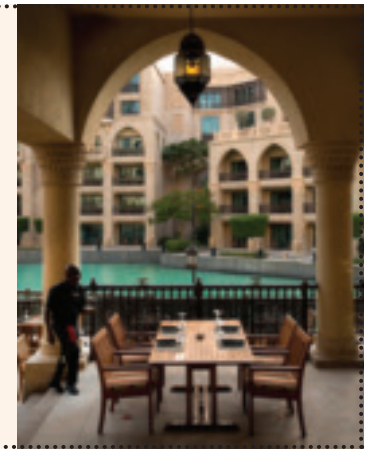


WIN! DINNER FOR A WINNER AND THREE GUESTS AT AMWAJ ROTANA'S BBQ NIGHT AT HORIZON RESTAURANT, WORTH DHS1,100

Families are in for a treat with the BBQ dinner buffet offering fantastic cuisine at Horizon all-day dining, Amwaj Rotana, JBR, Dubai. On Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 6.30PM to 10.30PM, the outlet promises a family-style buffet including a live BBQ, live sushi station, cheese station and a hot dessert station. Little guests will enjoy a special kids' buffet and fun corner with all the activities to keep their idle hands busy. It's a BBQ not to miss!

WIN! A DINING VOUCHER FOR THE MEAT CO, SOUK AL BAHAR, OLD TOWN BURJ DUBAI, WORTH DHS500

Serving the finest steaks in the UAE complemented by an impressive wine selection with international appeal, The Meat Co is a 'must visit' dining destination. The décor includes lavish design features and textures, while the outside deck offers views of the Burj Dubai. For an intimate dinner for two, the Chef's table is must try option, it's perfect for a romantic rendezvous.





WIN! A DINING VOUCER FOR USHNA, ABU DHABI, WORTH DHS500

Ushna is the multi award winning Indian restaurant located in Souk Qaryat Al Beri, Abu Dhabi serving contemporary Indian cuisine. The staff are attentive and well-informed, and the restaurants' atmosphere includes both the exclusivity required for business and the intimacy desired for a romantic dinner. It boasts a beautiful terrace with views of the marina and the Grand Mosque.

WIN! A DINING VOUCHER FOR SIGNATURE BY SANJEEV KAPOOR, WORTH DHS500

Signature by Sanjeev Kapoor has redefined traditional Indian cuisine by creating imaginative dishes infused with new flavours, served artfully to guests. The avant-garde restaurant showcases 'art on a plate', an Indian dining experience where food is synonymous with entertainment. Elegantly themed interiors have been designed to create an intimate atmosphere with elegant wooden finishes and white tablecloths. Equally, the outdoor terrace invites diners to enjoy a delightful meal Al Fresco Style.



WIN! A DINING VOUCHER AT CIRCLE CAFÉ IN THE DUBAI MALL, WORTH DHS500

Circle Café, the simple, fresh and delicious casual dining restaurant offers an extensive menu of homemade dishes, and has now opened its doors at the Dubai Mall. Starting from a simple proposition of NYC-style bagels, Circle has evolved its menu to suit all palettes – from freshly tossed salads and handcrafted sandwiches to homemade desserts.



To stand a chance to win these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.

*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of CPI Media Group and entrants below 21 years old are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

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